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1855.

MISS GRANDFATHERLY, B.V.

Presented with the "CHILDREN'S PRIZE," January, 1855.

THE
CHILDREN'S PRIZE

EDITED BY J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.



1868.

LONDON.

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM MACINTOSH, 24, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. I.]

JANUARY, 1868.

[One Penny.]



Margaret and little Ernest.



MINI GRANDFATHER

Presented with the "CHILDREN'S PRIZE" January 1888

THE
CHILDREN'S PRIZE

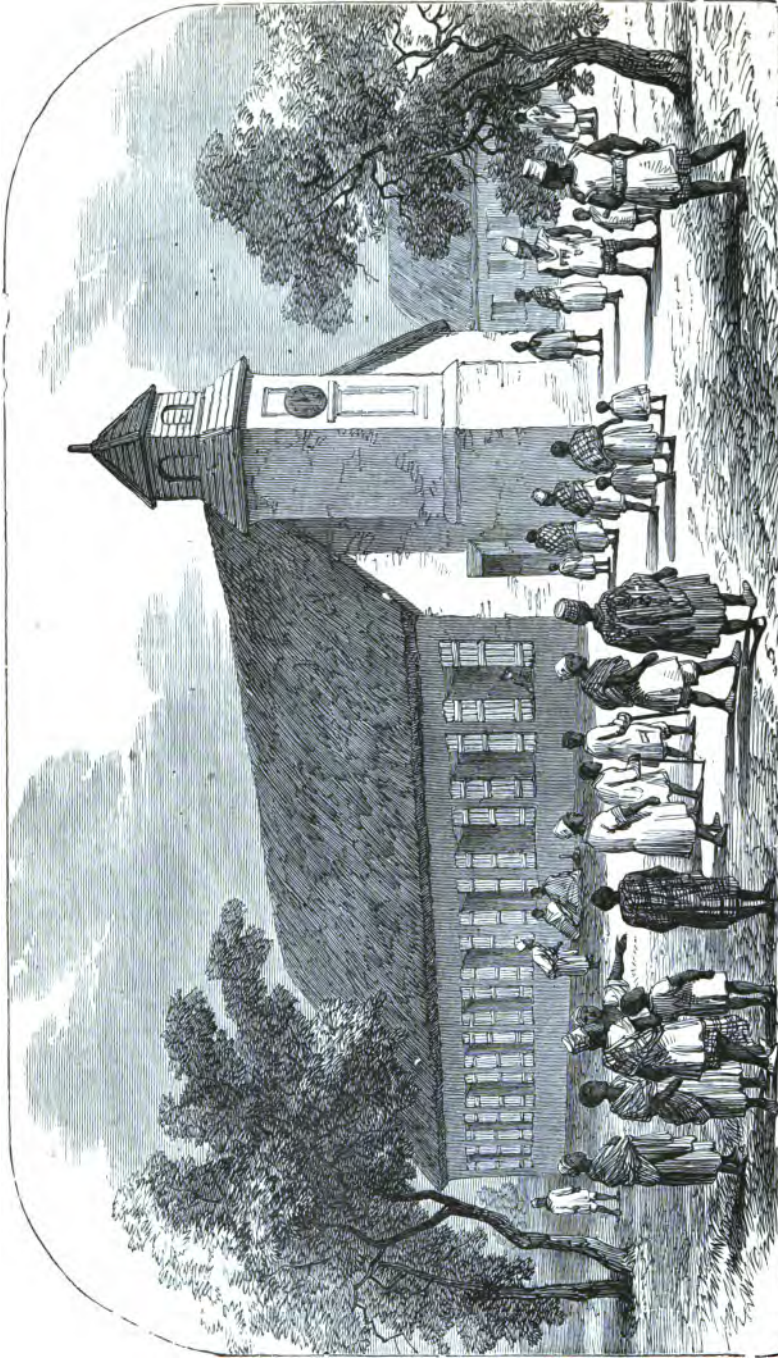
EDITED BY J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.



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Going to Church in Africa on New Year's Morning.

glad to say the church is being re-built in a similar style. It was erected at the cost of some people in England, who, when they heard of the fire, immediately began

to collect funds for the second one. This is to have a roof of iron, which will not burn like thatch in case of another fire.

And, now let us remember that if we in

England have neither such hot weather on New Year's Day and all the year round, neither such flowers nor fruits of the earth as they have in Africa, we have what is

better,—such seasons as are good for us. In Africa there are always fever and sickness, to say nothing at all about the snakes, scorpions, and other poisonous reptiles which get into houses and churches,

and lie on seats where we are to sit down, or get even into our clothes and boots and beds. Of all these and more we are free, and, after all, “there is no place like home.”
W.



THE ARCH OF TITUS.

THIS triumphal arch, the beautiful ruins of which are still one of the sights of Rome, was built by the Roman Senate (or Parliament, as we should call it) and the Roman people in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, and was dedicated to Titus in commemoration of his conquest of Jerusalem. The arch is of white marble, and the inscription in clear capital letters is still easy to read. The inside of the arch is

adorned with sculptured pictures. On one side, Titus is shown in his car of triumph, being crowned by the hand of Victory. On the other side, there is a picture of the utmost interest, even to our day, for it represents a procession in which are to be plainly seen both captive Jews, and also men bearing on their shoulders the seven-branched golden candlestick, the silver trumpets, and the gold table of the shew-

bread. Those very things which our Bibles describe as being used in the Temple at Jerusalem are here to be seen pictured in marble by an artist who saw them, and who lived more than 1800 years ago. Thus the arch of Titus is not only a specimen of the grace and beauty of ancient art as it was at Rome in the far back times when Britons were only painted savages, but also it is another of those monuments which prove the truth of what we read in our Holy Scriptures.



THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

OUR Scripture pictures this year are to put before us some mothers of whom we read in the Holy Bible; and we begin, as we are bound to do, with the first mother of the human race.

When God had made the light and the sky—the dry land and the seas—the sun and moon—the grass and the trees—the birds, the fish, the cattle,—then He created Adam, and gave him dominion over all that was on the earth, and God put the man to live in the beautiful garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

Then the Lord God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him, and God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and while he slept God took a rib out of his side, and made it a woman, and brought her to Adam, and she became his wife. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man; but afterwards Adam called his wife's name Eve (which means 'Life'), because she was the mother of all living.*

Adam and Eve lived in the garden of Eden (or garden of Pleasure, as the word Eden means), but they did not long enjoy its delights. Satan, who once had been a bright and happy angel in heaven, but for

rebellion and disobedience had been cast down to hell, saw our first parents, and he envied their bliss. Under the guise of a serpent, Satan tempted Eve to eat of the fruit of the single tree which God had commanded them not to eat—the one thing that was left them by which they might show their desire to obey God, who had been so good to them.

When Eve yielded to the tempter, she became a tempter in her turn, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. Thus sin came into the world, and death followed on sin, and Adam and Eve were cast out of their beautiful garden.

Yet, even when God was pronouncing their doom, He gave a promise of hope in the future; for He said that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. iii. 15.) That seed of the woman was Christ, who thousands of years after was born of a woman, even the Blessed Virgin, and by His death on the Cross He destroyed him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. ii. 14), and so bruised the serpent's head.

Some time after our first parents were cast out of Eden, Eve had her first-born son, and she called his name Cain (which means 'a possession'), and she said, *I have gotten a man from the Lord*; or it may be that she thought that this was the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head—that this was the Deliverer; and so she said, *I have got a man, the Lord*, that is, 'I am the mother of the promised seed, the God-man—the Messiah!'

But too soon she found that she was sadly mistaken. She soon learned that the sin which by her means had come into the world took the brightness out of all enjoyments of earth; and perhaps this is shown in the name which our first mother gave to her second son, for she called him Abel, which means 'Vanity.'

We read nothing of the boyhood of Cain and Abel. We are told nothing of the care which we may be sure their mother had for them. But, we read that when Cain and Abel were grown up, they were offering sacrifice to the Lord, and Cain offered the fruits of his ground, while Abel

offered a lamb from his flock. God, by fire from heaven, or in some other way, showed that He accepted Abel's sacrifice—which fore-shadowed Jesus, *the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world* (St. John, i. 29); while no sign of God's acceptance came on Cain's sacrifice, and he was wroth, *and it came to pass that when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.* Then the voice of the Lord said unto Cain, *Where is Abel thy brother?* and Cain, boldly and insolently, lied unto God, and said, *I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?*

Then God pronounced sentence on the first murderer, and said that the blood of the murdered Abel cried unto Him, and that the ground which had drunk up that blood should no more yield its strength when Cain tilled it, and that he should be *a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.*

What terrible sorrow must have filled the loving mother-heart of Eve when she saw Death for the first time laying his cold hand on a human brow—when she had to mourn over her dutiful and obedient son Abel, slain by his brother's hand—and had to lament for her first-born son, who was now driven from his home and kindred under the curse of Almighty God.

If she had not felt it before, Eve must then have learnt the terrible woe which had been brought into the world by her yielding to appetite and pride at the whisper of the Tempter in the Garden. What a contrast between Eve in Eden—happy, peaceful, pure,—and Eve a bereaved and heart-broken mother, wailing over her one son dead in his grave, and weeping for her other son branded with the mark of a murderer!

This was sin's handiwork! If there had been no sin there would have been no suffering—no sorrow—no death; and it is so still. Sin will mar *our* happiness also. Oh! then let us watch and pray that we enter not into temptation! Let us shrink from the first whispers of the tempter—let us beware of the snares and deceits of Satan; and, above all, let us trust in Jesus Christ, Who is the Promised Seed of the woman, and Who came to destroy the

works of the devil, and to deliver all who trust in Him from the power of sin here, and the punishment of sin hereafter! Let us, as loving and obedient children, look unto Jesus, and walk in His holy ways, and then, when this life's shadows pass away, we shall enter into a brighter and better Paradise than that which the sin of Adam and of our first mother lost.

THE THREE WISHES.

CHAPTER I.

ONE winter evening three children sat round the fire; they were tired with play, and it was too early for candles to be lighted; so the eldest said, "Now let us talk," and they had brought their chairs quite near the fender, and sat looking into the bright flames that danced up and down amongst the coals. But they did not seem to have very much to say, for, instead of talking, they were all quite silent. Outside the window the rain was beating, and the wind howling as it rushed against the house, and between the gusts the children could hear the roar of the great waves as they dashed upon the shore. It was very pleasant to sit cosily by the fire while the weather was so rough out of doors, and perhaps that was what made the children sit still for so long a time without wishing to do anything else.

At last the youngest (who was quite a tiny girl, and sat on a low chair that did not nearly reach to the top of the nursery fender) looked up and said,—

"Why don't we talk?"

Then the others laughed, and the second child said,—

"What shall we talk about? Shall we make up stories, or play at being 'company' and grown-up, like big people?"

"I wish I was big like papa," said the eldest, who had been silent for some time, and had sat with his elbows on his knees, looking into the fire.

"Let us all wish!" cried the youngest little girl. "Oh! do let us wish!"

And so it was settled that they should think for five minutes by the nursery clock, which was just then striking five, and then each should say what they wished for



Cain and Abel, Gen. iv. 2.



The Three Wishes.

most in the world. They all began to think very hard what they should like best, and a great many things that they wished for came into their heads, and were pushed out again by other things that they seemed to wish more. The youngest thought of that beautiful doll, with blue eyes and long curly hair, that was under the glass-case in the toy-shop, and, at first, she wished for that. But before the five minutes were over she remembered her favourite story of "Puss-in-boots," and wished she had a cat in boots who was as clever as the one in the story-book; but she recollected just in time that nurse had said it wasn't a true story, and that there were no real cats like that, and she was glad she had not told the others of her wish, because Tom would have laughed.

Then the five minutes came to an end, and little Nellie was not ready to say what she wished for. And presently it turned out that the other two were not a bit more ready than she was, so they agreed to take ten minutes more, and then everybody was to be sure and have their minds quite made up.

They all began to think again harder than before, but little Nellie found it very difficult—she would have liked to be one of the princesses in the fairy tales, but there was just the same fault to find with that as with Puss-in-boots, so she had to give it up; and then she could not remember anything she wanted, except the doll, and, somehow, it did not seem worth while to wish so very much for that. At last, all in a minute, something came into her head. She recollected how her mamma had kissed her last night, just before she went to sleep, and had said, "God bless my Nellie, and make her good and happy!"

"I'll wish what mamma wishes," thought Nellie; "that's sure to be right, and that means so much: perhaps if I wish that, I may get the doll, or even Puss-in-boots. But no, that's not likely; but the doll might come, and lots of things—and then, if I'm good, nurse won't scold, or mamma be sorry."

And with a sigh of relief the little golden head sank against the bars of the fender, and Nellie waited patiently till the

ten minutes were ended. At last they were gone, and Tom said,—

"Are you ready?"

And the other two children said, "Yes," they were quite ready, and listened eagerly for Tom to tell them what he wished.

"I should like to go away over the sea to foreign countries, where there are lions and bears; and I should like to be a great man like Julius Cæsar, and fight battles and win them, and have the people shout when they saw me come home."

And then the second child told her wish,—

"I should like to write a book, and that everybody should read it, and to get a great deal of money, enough to build an hospital like the one at Wentham."

And Nellie said,—

"I should like to be good and happy."

The three children sat round the fire talking over their wishes, but in the meantime something happened. Although none of them had known it, or even thought of it, each child's guardian angel had been near them while they wished; and as soon as they had done, the three angels spread out their great white wings and flew straight up through the sky towards the most distant star. They flew up and up, till they reached heaven, and when they came into the presence of the Great Father they bowed their heads, and, folding up their great white wings, they stood waiting. And then leave was given them to speak, so they told the wishes of the children. And the Great Father gave the angels leave to do what they had asked, and they flew down and down through the dark night, each with their own message to fulfil.

CHAPTER II.

Fifty years passed away, and once again the rain beat against the window and the wind howled amongst the trees, while inside a large house the fire-light danced and flickered on the walls and furniture, bright with gold and rich silks. On one side of the hearth sat a tall man with white hair. He looked very worn and ill, and he bent forward towards the blaze, as if he could not keep enough warmth in his body unless he were close to it. Opposite to him sat a

lady, with a grave, quiet face. Her hair, too, was grey, and she sat looking into the fire, with her white, thin hands clasped together on her lap. And then into the room came a child—a child with golden hair—and took a place between them on the hearth; but they did not see her. They did not know she was so near them, but they were thinking of her; and presently the gentleman looked up at a picture over the mantelpiece—a picture of the very child who stood close by him—and said,—

"Do you remember our wishes?"

And the lady answered, "Yes, she remembered."

And, just for a minute, the grand, bright room faded away, and they saw instead a nursery, with a high fender and three children sitting round the fire. Then the lady spoke again,—

"You have had your wish; you have been across the sea to wild countries, and hunted lions and bears, and fought battles and won them, and to-day when you came home the streets were full of people, who shouted as you came. Has it made you happy?"

And the gentleman shook his head sadly, for he thought of two graves out in that distant country, and how his wife and little child lay sleeping there, while he was alone, and he felt that all the honour and fame and glory he had won could not make up to him for what those graves held. And besides, though he did not think of it, there was another thing that made him miserable. All the time that he had been growing great and rich he had let his heart grow hard, proud, and discontented; and so, though he had had his wish, he felt as if he had had nothing at all, and rebelled against the Great Father who had sent some sorrow into his life. No, his wish had *not* made him happy.

And the lady spoke again,—

"I have had my wish. I wrote a book, and everybody read it, and money came, enough to build the hospital at the gate; and many sick people have blessed me for giving them health and strength once more."

And the gentleman asked,—

"Are you happy?"

She bowed her head as she answered,—

"I am content. My life has been very quiet; sometimes very sad. I am growing old now, and, till to-day when you came home, I have lived here always alone. Once I thought it would have been different, and that I should have had children of my own to love. But God has given me many sick children to take care of for His sake. I am quite content."

Then the gentleman pointed to the picture (though the child was standing close beside his knee he did not see her),—

"And what of her? She wished to be good and happy."

The lady looked up and smiled.

"Surely she had her wish fifty years ago, when God took her to be one of the angels that always behold His face in heaven."

"We did not think so then," said the gentleman. "Why have you changed your mind?"

"No," answered the lady, "we did not think so then. We found her sleeping in her crib, with a smile on her face as if the angels had called her, but we never thought how happy she was, or that God would keep her always good; we only wanted our Nellie back again. Would she have been always good and happy had she stayed with us on earth? Have *we* been so? It was only so that her wish could be fulfilled; ours bound us to earth, but hers led her straight to heaven. She will be waiting for us there by-and-bye, and even now I know we have a child in heaven who loves us."

While she spoke the figure of the golden-haired child grew brighter and clearer, and the glistening white robes shone like the stars. And then the child glided across to the lady and kissed her forehead. The lady thought a little breath of wind touched her; but that night she dreamed of the little Nellie who loved her still in heaven.

Then the child went to the other side of the hearth, and put her hand softly on the gentleman's heart.

He did not know it. But as her hand touched him all the proud, bad things that he had gathered into his heart in those fifty years dropped away from him one by one, and he grew humble and loving once more,

with no hard thoughts, no angry murmurings against the Great Father's will. The cloud of discontented sorrow that had closed about him floated away before the star-like radiance that the child shed round her, and two tears rolled slowly down his cheeks, as he gently murmured, "Thank God that we have a child in heaven who loves us!"

CHILD-MURDER IN INDIA.

WHAT is that woman doing in the picture? and why does she wring her hands over her baby, when the infant is not dead, nor looks as if it were going to die?

If you look close into the picture, you will see that the babe is not lying upon the ground, but on a bed of broad leaves made of the lotus plant, and that it is actually laid in the water. In short, strange as it may seem, it is the mother of the child, the very same who is grieving so over it, who is about to forsake her own offspring, to please her false goddess Gunga, who, as she believes, commands her to do so.

Many and many a poor little innocent baby has been thus sacrificed by its own mother, who commits it to the river Ganges, at the same moment that she sheds tears for its loss. Such is Hindu heathenism, and in it we have an answer to the question asked by the prophet Isaiah, as if such a thing could never be—"Can a woman forget her sucking child?"

We are glad to say that this fearful practice of child murder is now much less frequent than formerly. Our Queen, who reigns over India, has forbidden the practice by law. The religion of the people, however, is stronger than any law, and heathen mothers still put their children to float away in the river Ganges, which they believe to be a goddess. It is now, however, done more in secret than formerly, and this is why the woman before us has come out by moonlight to commit the sad deed.



When the child is set afloat, one would think that the mother would go away, in hopes that, perhaps, the child might be taken up by some one and be saved; but no—she watches it till it floats out of sight, or is *eaten up by a crocodile*. If the little one is carried back to the shore, by the current, the mother fills its mouth with mud, and then sends it afloat again to die more speedily, that the goddess may not be disappointed of her sacrifice.

How dreadful! And all this is a sore struggle between the mother's love and her duty to Gunga. If she should not please Gunga, she believes that she would never know peace again. Let us from this learn to pity those who are in such gross darkness, and help to send them light—"the light that lighteth the Gentiles,"—which is the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. W.



SULKY SARAH.

WHY is Sarah standing there,
 Leaning back upon a chair,
 With such an angry lip and brow?
 I wonder what's the matter now.
 Come here, my dear, and tell me true;
 Is it because I spoke to you
 About your work when you were slow,
 That you are standing fretting so?

Why then, indeed, I'm grieved to see
 That you can so ill-temper'd be:
 You make your fault a great deal worse
 By being angry and perverse.

Oh! how much better 'twould appear,
 To see you shed a humble tear,
 And then to hear you meekly say,
 "I'll not do so another day."



SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S PATIENCE.

Vesometimes forget that anything we do is likely to be remembered, and may set an example to other people. I was reading lately about that cold country in North America where the Esquimaux live. All through the dreary winter, when the sun never shines and the ice and snow cover the land and the sea, the Esquimaux live in their ice-houses, dressed in thick seal and bear skins, and manage to exist during the long dark months.

When the summer-time comes, for a while there is no darkness, as the sun shines all day and all night too; and then the air gets very warm, and the ice-fields melt, and the great ice-mountains float along the green sea, reflecting all the colours of the rainbow from their glassy sides. The Esquimaux go out in their boats to hunt the fat seals, and all the animals and plants come to life, and amongst other insects some very troublesome ones—mosquitoes, which are like gnats, that bite and suck the blood of every one they can settle on. They are very annoying in the close, warm huts of the Esquimaux, and when Sir John Franklin was once in those parts they came about him and tried to sting him; but instead of getting angry, and trying to kill them, he just quietly and gently brushed them off, and went outside into the air, where they would be less tiresome. The Esquimaux noticed his care even of insect life, and the example must have made a deep impression upon their minds; for several years afterwards, when Sir George Back was in the same country, and the mosquitoes were buzzing about and worrying him, he lighted something, the smoke of which would kill them all. The Esquimaux remarked what he did too, and then they told him of what their "Great Father," as they called Sir John Franklin, had done, and how careful he was not to injure even the

smallest of God's creatures, feeling that he could never restore life to one of these tiny insects. If you have ever seen the leg or sting of a gnat, or one of its wings in the microscope, you will know how beautifully it is made, and then you will not wish to hurt poor flies or daddy-long-legs, as I have known some cruel children do.

ISABEL THORNE.

INCIDENT IN THE EARLY LIFE OF SIR MATTHEW HALE,

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF ENGLAND.

MR. HALE, with some other young students, being invited to be merry out of town, one of the company called for so much wine that, notwithstanding all that Mr. Hale could do to prevent it, he went on in his excess, till he fell down as if dead before them; so that all that were present were not a little affrighted at it, who did what they could to bring him to himself again. This did particularly affect Mr. Hale, who thereupon went into another room, and, shutting the door, fell on his knees and prayed earnestly to God, both for his friend, that he might be restored to life again, and that himself might be forgiven for giving such countenance to so much excess; and he vowed to God that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor drink a health while he lived. His friend recovered, and he most religiously observed his vow till his dying day. And, though he was afterwards pressed to drink healths, particularly the King's, which was set up by too many as a mark of loyalty, and drew many into great excess, he never forgot his vow, though sometimes roughly treated for this, which some hot and indiscreet men called, obstinacy.

This wrought an entire change on him; now he forsook all vain company, and divided himself between the duties of religion and the studies of his profession. In the former he was so regular, that, for six-and-thirty years' time, he never once failed going to church on the Lord's-day, till an ague first interrupted that constant course, when he reflected on it as an acknowledgment of God's great goodness to him in so long a continuance of his health.

BRIGHT-EYED INDUSTRY.

THERE is an active little thing,
 With loving heart and nimble fingers,
 Who takes from penury its sting;
 Near whom discomfort never lingers.
 Can you tell me who is she?
 'Tis bonny, bright-eyed Industry!

She's gay and gleesome, trim and neat,
 Young and blooming, full of grace;
 No grass e'er grows beneath her feet,
 No cloud e'er settles on her face;
 The sunshine of her home is she,
 My bonny, bright-eyed Industry!

There's nothing that she will not do,
 Except what's wrong, and that she spurns;
 The longest task she soon gets through,
 And to the hardest blithely turns;
 You'd think a magic wand had she,
 My bonny, bright-eyed Industry!

At school she's always at the top
 Of all her classes, for she knows
 Not what it is behind to stop,
 But still before the foremost goes;
 First in learning's race is she,
 My bonny, bright-eyed Industry!

Our kind instructor likes her well
 And always calls her "his right hand,"
 Without whom none can read or spell,
 Or grammar's mysteries understand;
 What would e'en heaven-born genius be
 Without the aid of Industry!

ST. BERNARD DOG.

POOR Mr. Albert Smith, who used to give such amusing lectures on Mont Blanc, also gave a good deal of real information, only he did not seem to do so. He said that the bottles, casks, and cloaks, round the necks of Alpine mastiffs, or St. Bernard dogs, which one sees in pictures, are not realities, but inventions.

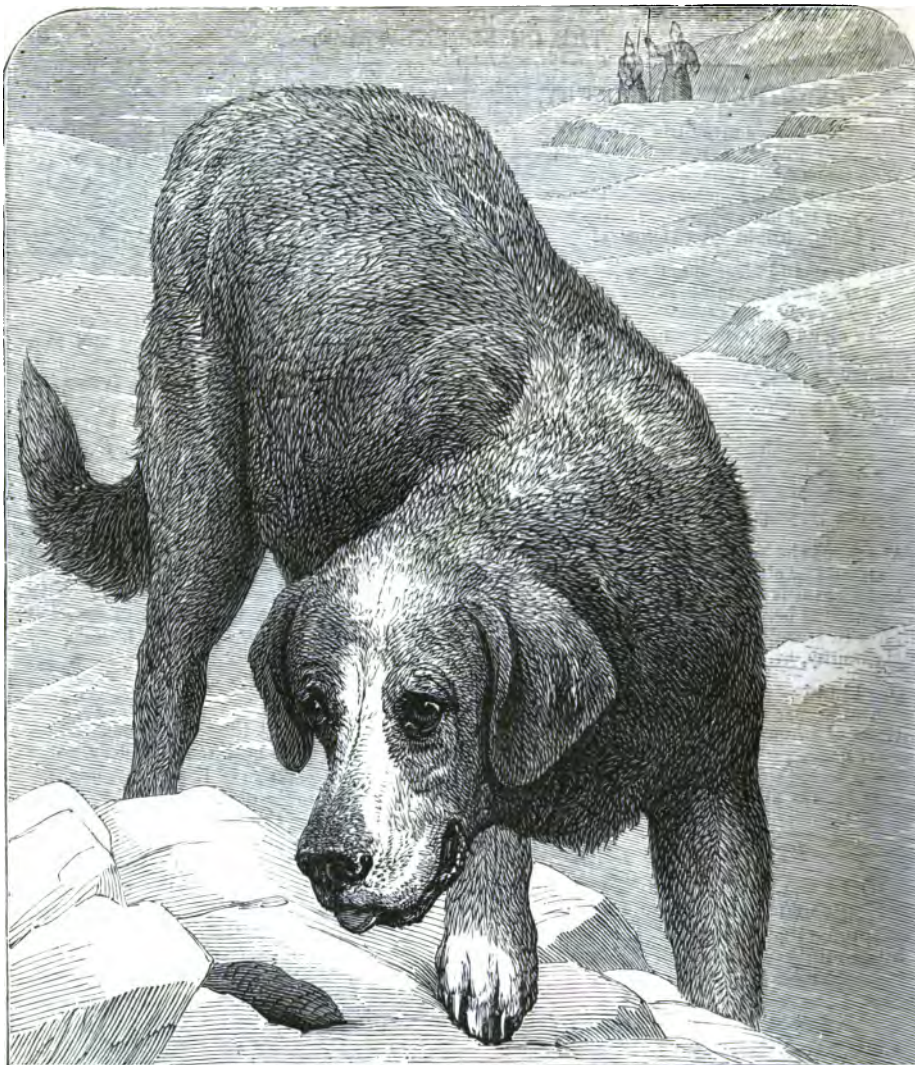
The first use of these dogs was, and is, to find the right way home when the paths are snowed up, and in a storm. Solitude is no longer solitude if a good dog is with you; and I can well imagine how comforting their presence is to the kind monks on their charitable errands. The dogs soon discover the object of their masters' excursions, and help with their capital noses. But all dogs would do

that; it does not belong to one species. The Scotch sheep-dog will find sheep in the same way; and many of the so-called sheep-setters (that is, dogs that will scent and show where the poor buried sheep lie in the snow-drift) find out by their instinct what the men with their poles are feeling for, and soon learn to help them with their noses.

Most dogs will try to give notice of any human being that seems lost in a ditch or by the road-side. And during the last severe winter the dog of some miners attracted them by his howl to a spot on a moor, where a man lay all but perished, and so saved him.

Should you, however, walk out with a handsome, big, mastiff-like dog (although he really partakes of the spaniel), on a fine frosty morning, when there has been a fall of snow, and he rolls, capers, sniffs it, and also eats some of it, do not think he is now showing his wonderful faculty of wishing to save life, and finding dead people in the snow. Oh, no! he only enjoys what every dog enjoys— a bit of clear snow. Nevertheless, they are charming dogs. I have seen many: they vary much, even at the monastery. Some are much larger, and mastiff-like; some smaller, and partake of the colley, or Continental butcher's dog. The latter, which seems most like the St. Bernard dogs, are red, with white streak down the face and chest, and white feet and tip of tail; a jet-black nose, and lovely brown eyes. They are a moderate size, too; not huge, with a good, close, cat's foot, and not shaggy hair.

There are also quite shaggy, or even curly, ones, and many have very conceited tails, which they whisk about. In fact, they are not the solemn grandees one has been taught to believe them. The Simplon dogs are, however, much more so: some which I saw many years ago at a gentleman's house near Windsor were, indeed, splendid specimens of the Alpine mastiff; but we are talking of the *real* St. Bernard dog: yet whatever they look like, their services remain the same, and a great many lives would annually be lost without the help of a Dog.



The Mount St. Bernard Dog—Sketched from Life by F. W. KEVL.

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FEBRUARY, 1868.

[One Penny.



The Rat—Sketched from Life by F. W. KEVL.



THE RAT.

Y first acquaintance with rats was made in trying to catch some culprits, who not only robbed my numerous flock of pigeons of their food, but who also were suspected of stealing the eggs, and even tearing open the well-filled crops of the pigeons for the sake of the grain. I caught a good many, but chiefly young ones. In time the whole tribe disappeared from my premises, true to the nature of the brown or migratory rat, to which they belonged. Finally, I gave up the pigeons, and the next rats which engaged my attention were various young ones, from the perfectly blind, naked little rat, which looks very much like an incipient hippopotamus, to the half-grown hobble-de-hoy rat, who would not hesitate to defy the first enterprise of a three months' old kitten. Then came a great acquaintance—a fat, portly rat, piebald, and with a stumpy tail. He was introduced to some of the most brilliant society of London by his good-natured and well-known master, the late Mr. J——B——, who used to carry about this rat in the breast-pocket of his coat. It used to feast on Alba plums and Portugal grapes, with many other dainties, at the dessert table, and had a bright blue bow fastened round his neck to make it look smart for the occasion, just as little Charlie or Minnie are dressed up to come down after dinner. Alas! it disagreed as much with the rat as it does with little people; poor Spotty got dreadfully fat, and one day, getting very sleepy, he overbalanced himself, and fell from the edge of the table. Now any common rat would have laughed at such a tumble, and not even shaken itself to run away, but our fat friend's legs were too weak to support such a prize-pig's body as it had got, through gobbling and luxury; and the consequence was, his unbroken fall killed him. A fancy for rats seems to have run in the family of that gentleman, for, at the country-seat of a relation of his, I saw in

a cage two splendid *white-black* rats. 'White-black' seems to be nonsense; but it means that the little creatures were white specimens of the old-fashioned English rat, which, by way of distinction from the coarser and more recently introduced 'brown rat,' is called the 'black rat.' The latter has a shiny velvety coat, and is really a handsome animal. I always thought the brown rat very forbidding, till one day I had occasion to procure two live ones for the purpose of drawing them. They were supplied to me from the Zoological Gardens, where, from necessity, incessant war is waged against rats. But it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and while rats are a serious expense to the Society, through their stealing and their attacks on the poultry, they form quite an item in the bill of fare of many of their animals. Eagles, vultures, kites, and many of the small carnivora, have dinners of rats, which they enjoy as much uncooked as the Chinese do their cooked ones.

But to return to my two 'model' rats. They appeared at my house in a trap one evening, and the first thing they did was to wake the babies by their squealing, although they were in the passage and the children upstairs; for the moment the shaking caused by the transit ceased, they began to fight in the most desperate manner. I suppose they were accusing each other of the misfortunes which had befallen them, and fell out about it; as stupid people will also do, though they ought to know better than my poor rats. I thought it cruel to let them have it 'out,' and perhaps find a dead and half-eaten rat in the morning; so I rushed to the ironmonger and got another trap, into which I managed, with the help of my frightened cook to put one of them. It was one of those cold nights we had last winter, and as I thought it was bad enough for them to have lost their liberty, and not to have any warm holes to creep into and huddle together, I put a piece of old woollen covering round the traps. In the morning I found both rats had cleverly tucked themselves up in their quarters. The biggest rat had torn the

covering somewhat, and made a tidy nest, but the younger one had only carefully pulled it in and round himself. The difference simply arose from the fact that I had put some hay between the two cages, which kept the smaller rat warm, while the big rat had only hard wood under the cage, and so thought himself entitled to a little extra comfort. Finding the young rat, during the day, getting rather cold, I put the trap on the fender to give it a warm; it immediately began to clean itself, and wash itself all over with its paws: all on a sudden, it stared wildly and jumped about the cage; the reason was that it found the heat too great, and saw no escape. I removed it instantly, and put it on a chair, so that the comfort of the fire should still reach it. It instantly resumed its operations. Presently, my little girl put some water under the cage, on the chair, because we were afraid to open the trap-door. It was a pleasure to see the poor thing slake its thirst. From that moment both rats readily took biscuit, carrot, and grain out of our hands. Considering they had only been imprisoned a day or two, one marvels at their boldness. If, for the sake of getting them in their right position, I poked them gently with my pencil, they resented it by taking hold of it with their teeth, and the last day, before I got rid of them, and I put my fingers incautiously under the wires in order to carry them away, I was quickly warned by a nip; forgetting myself again, I got a good bite, the four little chisel-like teeth making the prettiest possible pattern in a punctured wound on my finger. I have no doubt that in a few weeks these rats would have been perfectly tame, and would have lost all their savageness. I felt very much inclined to keep them as pets but want of time did not allow me to do so. I reluctantly got rid of them, and only felt sorry that one should feel obliged to destroy an animal which seems to have so much intelligence and courage; unfortunately, it is necessary to get rid of the rats, or the rats would get rid of us. I always had great doubts about the usefulness of the rat's tail, which is certainly not a handsome appendage. The rat itself,

however, seems to think very differently, taking the greatest possible care of it, and licking and cleaning it most vigorously. I believe the tail helps to act as a feeler, and whenever the rat sat peaceably and comfortably, with its bead-like eyes fixed wonderingly upon me, the tail supported the front paws, as you see in the picture. There is an old fable about the rats consulting how to get rid of the cat, and how a young rat suggested to put a bell on the cat, so that they could always hear it; the difficulty was, to find the rat that would put the bell on. In Germany, however, they sometimes turn the tables, by putting a bell on a tame rat, which so scares her wild companions that they leave the neighbourhood.

When a child, I used to hear a great many legends about the rat king, and the service other rats did him. It is said, the origin of these fables arises from the fact that now and then young rats are found with their tails grown together. Rats seem affectionate to their own kind, and when the poor cripples grow up helpless, the other rats come and feed them. Sometimes these unfortunate monstrosities are found, or said to have been found (for I never saw one) in deserted lofts or cellars. Upon being attacked, perhaps, the anxious face of one of their relations showed they were watched, in trying to convey the cripples away, and hence the story of the rat king.

THE STORY OF A DAISY.

PRISONS are large strong houses where people who have done wrong are shut up for a long time, and made to work hard to teach them to do better, and to punish them for their wickedness. In London there is a very large one at Millbank, where many men and women are shut up for their crimes.

At one time there was a very bad woman who gave the prison-guards much trouble. She was violent and tiresome, and had to be punished very often; for she would fight and tear up her clothes, and break everything she could: besides saying many



wrong things, and using bad language. The Matron, who is the lady that has charge of the women, and the clergyman, tried hard to make her better, but she was as rough and as violent as ever, till all at once there was a great change in her manner; she became quiet and obedient, and seemed to try to do better. The Matron was very pleased to see this change in her conduct, and went one day into her cell, the room in which each prisoner is locked up by himself or herself. Each cell has a small bed, a stool, a table, and some books; and here the prisoner must stay all day, and all night quite alone, except once a-day, when they are taken to a yard where they must walk up and down while men watch them to see that they do not talk to each other. The woman was sitting on her stool with a book open before her; it was the Bible, and on the page was, what do you think? A daisy that had been pressed between the leaves, and was quite dry, though you could still see the green of its cup and the rosy tips to

its white petals. The woman was looking at this, and, as she did so, the tears stole down her cheeks, and her thoughts were evidently far away.

It seems that one day, when she was walking in the yard, she had found this little flower, which had sprung up between the great stones of the court. Its seed wafted, perhaps, from some green country fields had taken root there within the gloomy prison walls. The sight of the pretty flower had somehow brought back to her mind memories of the time when she was a happy girl gathering flowers for daisy chains, or the words of a kind mother who was often grieved by her wayward child; and so she had gathered the flower and treasured it, till watching it, it had softened her heart, and, under God's blessing, had been the means of making her a different woman. No doubt after this she was soon able to leave the prison, for if prisoners show that they intend to do better they are not kept in so long.

ISABEL THORNE.



MANOEL FRANCISCO.

A PORTUGUESE STORY.

MANY years ago there lived at a little village in Portugal a man named John, and his wife Maria. They had been married many years but had no child.

They were very well off for poor people, and had a farm of their own, and a pretty

vineyard. Altogether they lived a very happy life—they had plenty for themselves, and always something to give away to their poorer neighbours.

But although they had plenty to eat and to drink and to give away, yet they had one trouble: they had no child; they did not know what to do with their little property when they died; and they wished

much to have a son who should be kind like themselves, and who should try to make others happy.

At the top of a hill near the village there was a little chapel. Every morning for a whole year, wet or dry, Maria went up to this chapel, and knelt down and asked God to send her a little boy. Once a-week she used to go to market to Oporto, to take her butter and eggs. These she carried in a basket on the top of her head. Then she had free use for her hands, and could handle her distaff and spindle and spin flax as she went along. One day she had been to market, and had gone as usual into one of the churches to pray to God, and was walking home by the sea-side. It was a rough and stormy day. A small vessel was trying to get into the harbour. The coast was dangerous, and many persons stood watching the little ship, and Maria stood with them. At last there came a giant wave, and caught the ship and drove it upon a sand-bank, and threw it on its side. By this time a boat had just reached it; the sailors in the boat managed to save three men, but as they were going away they heard a scream, and saw a woman with a baby in her arms fall from the side of the vessel into the water. The men rowed hard, and caught them just as they were beginning to sink. As soon as they were safe on shore, Maria, who was always ready to help the distressed, took the poor woman and baby to her own home. The woman was weak and ill, but she was most anxious to know which of the men were saved, and when she found that Manoel Francisco was drowned she fainted.

Manoel Francisco was the owner of the little vessel. He was going from Lisbon to London with a cargo of oranges, but when the weather was stormy, he tried to get into Oporto harbour for shelter, and so his ship and all his property were lost, as well as his own life. The poor woman and the baby who were saved were his wife and child.

John and Maria showed the poor woman every kindness, but she never recovered from her loss; and in a week or two she died. She was most thankful for the kindness of her friends, and was grieved

that she could not reward them. But nothing caused her so much thankfulness as the promise that these good people would take little Manoel and bring him up as their own son. So poor Marguerita died, and baby Manoel became Maria's own son. Thus God granted her request in this strange manner, and made her own love and kindness to others bring its own reward. Manoel grew up to be a good and affectionate child, and, in order that he might learn to be kind to others, they soon taught him to feed the poultry on their farm, and to be kind to the donkey that you see standing beside him.

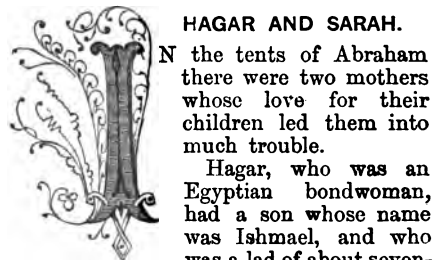
From learning kindness to the dumb animals they taught him kindness to his fellow-creatures, and he grew up to be as much loved as the worthy couple who adopted him. When the old people died they left Manoel their farm, and this is now his home; but he is not always there. Love for the sea seemed born in him, and he is captain of a boat stationed at the mouth of the harbour. This boat goes out to ships when the sea is too rough for them to come in, and lands passengers and takes letters.

In his time there have been several wrecks on the coast, and Manoel is always the foremost to go and save the lives of the sufferers. His little farm prospers, and his own children are taught the law of kindness, not only by word, but by the example of both their father and mother.

W. M.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

HAGAR AND SARAH.



IN the tents of Abraham there were two mothers whose love for their children led them into much trouble.

Hagar, who was an Egyptian bondwoman, had a son whose name was Ishmael, and who was a lad of about seventeen years when Sarah, in her old age, had a son; and as God had commanded, his name was called Isaac (Gen. xvii. 19.)

One reason why the women of Israel were very anxious to have children was the hope of being the mother of the Messiah, the Promised Seed in whom all families of the earth were to be blessed, and so Sarah was greatly rejoiced when Isaac was born. *And the child grew and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.*

And amid the festivities Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking. We are not told what he was mocking at; but we may suppose that, after Ishmael had been the hope and pride of his father for these seventeen years, he might be vexed and angry at feeling his place in the family so altered, and perhaps he may have made grimaces to annoy Sarah, and may have ridiculed the babe of her old age, as not likely to live.

Whatever Ishmael said or did, Sarah was greatly displeased, and foreseeing that there could be no peace in the household until Ishmael and his mother were gone, she said unto Abraham, *Cast out this bondswoman and her son: for the son of this bondswoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.*

This demand of Sarah, which betokens an unruly and envious temper, grieved Abraham. Ishmael had grown up in his tents, and the patriarch loved the lad; and the thought of driving him away from his household was very grievous to him, and he was much cast down and perplexed.

But in his doubt and difficulty God graciously came to his relief, and said unto Abraham, *Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondswoman: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondswoman I will make a nation, because he is thy seed.*

Abraham being now sure what was God's will, rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and he sent her away with her son Ishmael; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Though Ishmael was not what we mean

by a child, and was old enough to be an archer (v. 20), and support himself and his mother by his bow and arrow, yet he was but a stripling, and so when the water was spent in the bottle, he was exhausted by the parching heat of the desert sooner than his mother, and he was at the point to die. Then Hagar cast him under one of the shrubs, and she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, *Let me not see the death of my child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept.*

And the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, *What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not: for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.*

Thus this loving mother and her son were brought out of great tribulation. Though they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, and hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them; yet when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivered them out of their distress.

And God was with the lad Ishmael, and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer, and the chief of a numerous tribe, and the father of a powerful people. His mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt, one of her own people, and twelve sons were born to him, from whom sprang the Hagarens, so called from their first mother, Hagar; and also called Ishmaelites, from their father Ishmael; and afterwards Saracens, as some fancy because their father was an adopted son of Sarah, but much more likely from a Hebrew word meaning plunder, because they lived mainly by robbery.

The descendants of Ishmael went on increasing till they occupied the whole land of Arabia. After the rise among them of Mahomet and his numerous sect, they overran the adjacent countries, and at one time their conquests threatened to include the whole world. And though



'Abraham sent her away with her son Ishmael.'



Ernest looking at the Picture of his Mother.

Page 28.

they were checked, yet they remain to this day one of the most numerous and warlike races of the East.

The descendants of Ishmael became, and continue, what God declared to Abraham that they should be, a very great

nation (Gen. xxi. 13); and as He promised to Hagar, He has multiplied them exceedingly, so that they cannot be numbered for multitude (Gen. xvi. 10).

And not only so, but these Arabs have ever been, and are now, exactly what God

declared to Hagar that Ishmael should be—*‘a wild man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.’* (Gen. xvi. 12.)

Ishmael himself lived on by his sword and by his bow—by killing game and robbing men—in the wilderness in the neighbourhood of his brethren. His descendants were in constant strife with the descendants of Abraham and Job, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Esau. They continued to dwell near them, though they warred with them all—so, as History shows, it has been in all ages, down to our own. Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, have tried to conquer the Arabs, but in vain. They have defied every effort to change, subdue, or root them out; and to this day they maintain their marked distinctness as a people, and dwell as brave, wandering freebooters—their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them,—not in forlorn and desolate places, but in some of the most frequented regions of the East—in the very presence of their brethren of the human race.

Let us learn from this wonderful fulfilment of a promise, five thousand years old, to reverence the Holy Scriptures; and though doubters may sneer, and the wicked may scoff, yet let us be sure that God is true, and His word faithful, and that if He has so brought to pass what He promised to a forlorn mother—an Egyptian bondswoman in the wilderness—He will also most surely keep and perform the promises made to *us* by His own dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

ERNEST OF FELSENBURG.

(Continued from p. 3.)

CHAPTER III.

WHILE all the household were assembled in the child's room, weeping and lamenting,—while Margaret, with wildly despairing looks and dishevelled hair, was crouching on the ground beside the empty cradle, while the roses which had adorned it lay scattered and trodden under foot, the door opened and the Countess entered the room.

The wound of the Count had not been so dangerous as had been at first supposed; as soon as he was out of danger, the Countess, at his persuasion, set out on her journey home. She had that moment arrived, and hastened from the carriage to the room where she hoped to embrace the darling of her heart.

The entrance of the Countess caused a general consternation. Margaret cried aloud—“O God be merciful to me and to her!” The empty bed, the tearful faces, filled the Countess with dismay; but no one dared to answer her questions. A thousand dreadful fears darted through her mind, and she trembled for the life of her child; but what words shall describe her anguish, as she at last, half heard, half guessed, the truth!

“O God,” she cried, “what a dreadful burden hast thou laid upon me! Ah, my child, my child, my dearest child! O my husband, my beloved husband, this news will pierce thy heart more deeply than the swords of the enemy! O my darling Ernest, where art thou now? How terrible the thought that thou hast perhaps fallen into the hands of wicked men, and wilt learn their evil ways! Ah, rather would I have wept over thy grave; then thou wouldst have been a beautiful angel near the throne of God, and I should have had the hope of seeing thee again. But alas, this consolation is denied me! Ah! what will become of thee among such men!

“O God,” she cried again, falling upon her knees, and looking up to heaven with clasped hands and streaming eyes, “O God! Thou only consolation in all misery, my child is indeed torn from my arms, but from Thy hand he can never be taken. I know not in what dark wood, in what robber's cave he may be, but Thine eye sees and knows all. Thou hearest the cry of the young ravens, oh! hear the voice of my child. To me and to my husband give grace to bear this trial patiently. Although human wickedness has robbed us of our darling, yet it is Thy will; Thou hast so ordained it; to Thee will I offer my child, with a trusting, though a bleeding heart. I know well that even this

sorrow may, under Thy guidance, be turned into a blessing."

Poor Margaret the nurse fell at the feet of the Countess imploring her pardon. "Ah," she said, wringing her hands, "I would willingly shed the last drop of my blood to save the child. Oh, let me die; my fault deserves nothing less than death."

The Countess forgave her, saying, "Your present grief is punishment enough; no harm shall happen to you: but you must now see how necessary my commands were, and to what great misery disobedience, thoughtlessness, and love of pleasure, may lead. All our happiness in this world is at an end, like the roses which lie faded and scattered on the ground."

When the Countess had somewhat recovered from the first shock, and had learned that the child had been stolen about two hours, she sent out her people in all directions in search of him. As one messenger after another returned from the search, Margaret went to meet them, and her tears broke out afresh as soon as she saw their despairing looks. At length, when the last came back without having discovered any trace of the child, Margaret's grief was sad to see. Gradually she became more quiet, but went about pale and dejected, like a shadow of her former self. At last she disappeared from the castle.

CHAPTER IV.

We must now return to the lost child. An old gipsy woman had some time before obtained admission to the castle, under the pretence of telling fortunes, and while there had made herself acquainted with all the ways of the household. By an arrangement with the musicians, they kept the servants amused in a lower room with the noisy music, while she entered the garden through a little door in the wall, and hastened to the child's room and carried him off, together with all the valuables that she could collect together; and fled into a neighbouring wood.

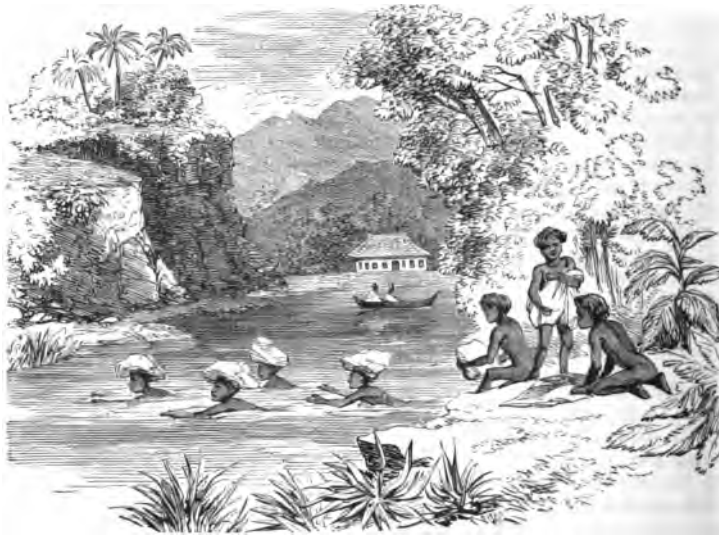
Here she hid herself with the child in a thicket until it was dark, when she left her hiding-place, and carried the child further, through secret, unfrequented paths. She had provided herself with food for the

journey, and wandered on for many miles until she reached the mountain. There she came to a deep cavern. The entrance was so overgrown with bushes, that it would have been almost impossible for any one not in the secret to have discovered it. After creeping for some time through stones, thorns, and brambles, the gipsy came to an iron door, of which she had the key. She opened the door, and through a long passage at last she reached the cavern itself.

This cavern was the abode of robbers, and here they hid themselves and their stolen treasures, consisting of valuable clothes, gold, silver, and jewellery. The robbers, a number of rough-bearded men, were sitting drinking and smoking when the gipsy entered with the child. They were very pleased when they heard that the child was the son of the Count of Felsenburg, and praised the gipsy for her successful theft; they had long wished to get into their power the child of some nobleman. "You have done well, old mother," said the captain of the band. "Now we are quite safe; if one of us should be taken prisoner, we who are left have only to threaten to kill the child if our comrade is not set free." He then ordered the gipsy, who cooked for the robbers, to take particular care of the child's health, as his life was so valuable to them.

In this gloomy cavern the poor child lived for some time, until all remembrance of his infancy had quite faded away. He knew nothing of the sun, the moon, nor any of the beautiful works of God, for no ray of daylight ever penetrated into this gloomy abode. A lamp which burned day and night hung from the ceiling, and threw a dull glare upon the rocky walls. There was no want, however, of food; the robbers brought bread and meat, vegetables and wine, in abundance. A large cask full of water stood in a corner of the cave: but as the water had to be fetched from a distance the gipsy was obliged to be very sparing with it, and ordered the boy to be very careful in turning the tap.

The old woman let the child want for nothing; he was plentifully provided with everything necessary for his bodily com-



Swimming to School.

fort, but she was quite incapable of giving him any instruction: he could neither read nor write, and never heard from these bad men a word of the good God who had made him. Only one among them, a young man named William, the son of honest people, who had taken to this wicked way of life from his love of gambling, showed kindness to the child. He often brought him playthings to amuse him; little carved wooden figures of a sheepfold with sheep, and shepherd and shepherd's dog; a garden with different sorts of trees covered with red and yellow fruit; a looking-glass, and other toys. Once he brought him a flute, and taught him to play little airs upon it; another time he brought him a group of painted flowers, and taught him to cut flowers out of paper, and paint them with various colours. But the most precious of Ernest's treasures was a little picture of his mother, which the gipsy had brought away from the castle; it was beautifully painted and set in gold, and surrounded with diamonds; but the gipsy only allowed him to have it now and then when she was in a good humour.

William often looked at this picture, and thought sadly of his own mother. "Poor child," he would say to himself, "how cruel it was to tear you away from such a mother! How gladly would I take you back to her if it were in my power!"

This young man often talked with the child, and told him many things which aroused his intelligence, but he never dared to speak of God or eternity, for the robbers carefully avoided all that might awaken their conscience.

(To be continued.)

SWIMMING TO SCHOOL.

WE once knew a boy, whose home was quite close to his school, and yet who, when he was sent there, managed to take a long round on his way. Sometimes he made time to do a little bird-nesting, or was seen with his ball upon the common, when he should have been at school and got his first lesson over.

How different from some other boys who live a long way from their school, and yet always get there quickly. There was a school formerly kept in the church porch



Fellahs of Egypt.

Page 30.

at Y—, in a deep valley, among the mountains, and yet one of the first boys there was one who had to cross a steep,

stony ridge, 1800 feet high, every morning, and scramble down to school.

In the face of a greater difficulty than

this, the black boys in the picture have to act. It is here a river, and not a mountain, which comes between them and the school-house. What do they do? There is no bridge nor boat. Do they wait for one, or go back? Neither. They take off their clothes, tie them up with their books in bundles, balance the bundles on their heads, and swim over. Such boys are sure to learn all that can be taught them, for their hearts are in it. W.

THE FELLAHS OF EGYPT.

IN the whole land of Egypt there are now only two cities, Alexandria and Cairo; yet once Egypt was the grandest country of the world, having as many as two hundred cities, but these have been all long swept away, or covered with the sand of the Desert. If you read the thirteenth chapter of the prophet Ezekiel, you will see the reason for this judgment upon the land.

In these two cities, Alexandria and Cairo, all the principal people of Egypt reside; while in the country districts up the Nile, there are no towns, and hardly any villages, but only scattered settlements of peasants, who are called Fellah or Fellahin.

These Fellahs, though of the same Arab race and religion as the people of Cairo, are very different in most other ways. A glance at the picture will give a good idea what they are like. Instead of the turban, the flowing robe, and the gay slippers, which the men of the city wear, we see only a half-clad figure, with matted hair, and skin blackened by the sun; instead of a veiled lady in a robe of silk, here is a poor woman, with naked feet, in a dress woven of grass. One thing, however, both use in common—a bracelet.

The Fellahs of Upper Egypt are very numerous, but they are all very poor. Their houses are mud huts, only used to sleep in, as they are in the open air most of the day. Their food consists chiefly of vegetables, which they eat uncooked, such as maize, melons, gourds, beans, lentils, and dates; those that have a cow can get milk, and all can get fish. Meat they seldom taste, and their bread is

only a half-baked paste of bruised maize, or millet. Rice is too dear for them. One luxury, however, all the men, and women too, manage to get, whatever else they go without,—that is, the ever-present long wooden tobacco pipe-smoking.

The poverty of many Fellahs is so great, that a family of children is often a great burden to the parents. Many cases yearly occur of parents selling their children as slaves, to escape from the expense of their support. A parent will sometimes make a long journey to Cairo, to get rid of his young children. Some time ago a woman brought to a rich lady of that city an infant, which she said she had found at the door of a mosque. The lady said she would take the child and adopt it, and handed the woman a small sum as a reward for her trouble in bringing the child. The woman refused the offer, blushed and withdrew. She was the child's own mother.

Yet, anxious as these poor people are to get rid of their *young* children, their desire to retain them when they grow up is as great. They need their sons to work for them, but as the army of the Pasha is drawn entirely from the Fellah class, many old people have no son at home to support them, as they are obliged to become soldiers. A few years back, the late Pasha was making a journey up the Nile, and happening one day to land at a certain village, an aged man came up, and seized the Pasha's sleeve, in spite of the attendants, who would have prevented him, and began to beg his son back again, who had been drafted against his will into the army. The Pasha heard his story, and gave him, not his son again, but a cow! The gift pleased the old man quite as much; all he wanted was something or somebody to keep him, and a cow that could give milk, to make into cheese and butter, was almost as good to him as a son.

It should be added that the cow which the Pasha bestowed was not the Pasha's own, but one which he took from the nearest field at hand, the property of another of his subjects, for these poor Fellahs do not enjoy the justice and good laws which we have in our free and happy England. W.

HONESTY: A TRUE STORY.



ROUGH and piercing was the wind one winter's morning in Edinburgh, for snow had fallen in the night, covering the doorsteps and pavement with countless flakes. A gentleman was leaving his house when a little urchin in ragged garb stepped forward, broom in hand and eagerly asked permission to sweep away the snow.

"You are a very little sweeper," said the gentleman; "do you think you can manage such work this cold morning?"

"Try me, sir: do try me!" said the boy.

"Very well," replied the gentleman, kindly. "Work away; and after you have finished you shall have some money and your breakfast."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" almost gasped the little sweeper.

And in a very short time the doorsteps had lost their white carpet, while a broad pathway had been cleared on the pavement leading from the house. The laughing eyes of several youngsters watched the little fellow from the windows; and no sooner was his work finished than he was brought into a warm kitchen, where, seated near a blazing fire, he did ample justice to his breakfast.

The pleasure of giving food to the hungry was fully felt in that happy home that morning, and after our little friend had finished his meal, he was brought upstairs to talk to the lady. Nor did he leave before he had received a silver coin of his "very own," while below his arm he was hugging a precious bundle, which contained an entire suit of clothes.

"Fortunate sweeper!" you are saying. Yes, dear children; but his story was a sad one. He had no mother to care for him, his father was sick; and they lived in a miserable room in the Old Town.

Beggars sometimes tell us such tales, that we fear they are not true; but this

boy's story seemed so real, that as he ran briskly from the door the children hoped they might see him some other day. The morning hours passed away, and the bright rays of the mid-day sun were melting the snow in the garden and on the trees; but the ice on the lochs was still frozen, and the boys were eagerly looking forward to another afternoon's skating. One o'clock struck, and a servant entered the drawing-room to say that the sweeper who was there in the morning had come back and wished to see the lady.

"What can he want, mamma?" exclaims more than one eager voice.

"We shall hear presently," she replies; and as she went downstairs there stood the little sweeper, dressed in the comfortable clothes, his face washed and his hair brushed. Altogether, the change in his appearance was marvellous. "Well, my little fellow, have you come to show us your new clothes?" said the lady.

"No, ma'am," he replied. "I like you to see them, and the little gentleman who gave them to me; but it was not for that I came." He then produced a pretty ivory tablet and pencil-case, saying, "Them things was in the pocket of the jacket, ma'am; but, you see, father taught me out of the good Book that it is wrong to keep what does not belong to me, and I have brought them back."

"Oh, how stupid of me to leave my present in the pocket, mamma!" said the little Harry in a loud whisper. "But is not that an honest boy?"

Yes, dear children, the little sweeper acted honestly. He did what was right, and we may learn a lesson from the earnest heed which he gave to God's blessed Word. You may be sure that the kind lady approved of his conduct, and encouraged him to continue in the study of the Bible, telling him that there he would find stories of Samuel and Timothy—those holy children who in boyhood's years were ever listening to the heavenly Father's voice.—*Children's Hour.*

NOTICE.

With "CHATTERBOX," Part I. for January, 1868, price 3d. is GIVEN a beautiful Coloured Picture—"CAUGHT NAPPING."



WHERE DOES THE SOUND COME FROM ?

OH, Tommy! whatever have you been doing to your drum?"

"Why, cutting it open to see where the sound comes from, and it's all full of nothing."

Of course all readers of *The Prize* are much wiser than Tommy, but nevertheless they may spoil much more valuable things than a parchment drum-head by being foolishly inquisitive.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. III.]

MARCH, 1868.

[One Penny.



The child started back frightened.'

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ERNEST OF FELSENBURG.

(Continued from p. 28.)

CHAPTER V.



As the boy grew older, he became very curious to know where the men went to, and often begged them to take him with them; but they answered him roughly or put him off with promises. Once they had all gone out upon an expedition, leaving behind the old gipsy woman, who was a dull companion for a lively boy; she would sit for hours mending old linen, without uttering a word, until she fell fast asleep.

On this day, when she had been sound asleep for some time the boy took courage, lit a taper, and went into the dark passage through which the robbers had gone out, until he came to the iron door, but finding it fast locked, he turned sorrowfully back. But in the passage through which he had come there were several narrower openings, in which one might wander about for hours under ground. He turned down the first of these passages, and after walking for some time until his taper was nearly burnt out, he thought he saw in the distance a bright light. Full of curiosity, he pressed on towards the light, which seemed to grow larger and larger. He went boldly forward until he came to an opening in the rock, through which the morning light was shining, and then, with one leap, he was in the open air.

It would be difficult to find words to describe the impression produced upon the delighted boy by this, his first sight of God's beautiful earth, upon his escape from his dark underground abode. It was a bright summer morning; the sun was just rising, and a soft glow hovered over the wood and mountain. The ground was everywhere covered with grass and flowers, and the birds were singing their morning songs of praise. Below, in the valley, the green tops of the mountains were reflected in the clear waters of a peaceful lake.

At all these new and wonderful sights the boy was beside himself with wonder; he seemed like a person awakened from a deep sleep. For some time he could find no words to express his delight. At last he exclaimed, "Where am I? how big and beautiful everything is!" And then he looked first at the great oaks, then at the bright lake, then at a flowering rose-bush.

And now the sun began to appear above the tops of the hills. The child looked at it with wondering eyes, and thought that it was a fire, and that the clouds were beginning to burn; until at last it rose, round and bright, over the hills. "What can that wonderful light be!" said the boy, looking at it with wonder, until dazzled by the increasing brightness, he was obliged to turn his eyes away. Then he went a little further, but scarcely ventured to walk about, for fear of treading upon the flowers which seemed scattered everywhere. All at once he saw a lamb lying under a bush. "Oh, a lamb! a lamb!" he cried joyfully, running up to it and touching it. The lamb got up and began to bleat. The child started back frightened. "What is that?" he cried; "it lives, it can move, it has a voice! Mine were quite dumb, and never moved at all. What a wonderful thing! Who can have made it alive?" He then wished to talk to the lamb, and asked it all sorts of questions, and was at last quite angry that it would only answer with its "bleat, bleat."

Presently a shepherd-boy, who had missed the lamb from his flock, came to look after it. The child was frightened at the first sight of the youth, but took courage when he spoke kindly to him. "Tell me," Ernest said to the youth, pointing with outstretched arms to the earth and sky, "does this large cave belong to you, and may I stay here with you and your lambs?" The youth did not understand the child at first, and thought that he must be mad. He asked him where he had come from, and when the child told how he had crept from under the ground, and talked about the old woman and the bearded men, the youth, seizing him by the hand, hastened away as if he thought the robbers were already after him.

CHAPTER VI.

In the mountain there lived a venerable hermit, more than eighty years of age, who was known by the name of Father Meurad, and was renowned far and wide for his wisdom and piety. To him the youth determined to take the child. The hermitage, which was not far off, was on the side of the mountain near the lake, and stood in the midst of a garden full of fruits and vegetables. Behind the cottage was a vineyard, and a cornfield stretched along by the lake. Upon an overhanging rock there stood a chapel, and a flight of steps cut out of the rock led up to it.

When the boys reached the hermitage and opened the garden-gate, the old man was sitting upon a wooden bench under an apple-tree; a large book, from which he was reading, lay on a table before him. His hair and beard were as white as snow, but his cheeks were fresh and ruddy.

He received the boys kindly, and listened to the story of the young shepherd; after questioning the child, he concluded that he belonged to noble parents, from whom he must have been stolen. "Leave the child with me," he said to the youth, "and say nothing about him to any one. I hope we may be able to find his parents, and here he is quite safe from the robbers, for they avoid my hut; they know that I have nothing worth stealing, and they despise the only treasures that I could give them—good advice and friendly warnings." Then turning to the boy he said, "You are heartily welcome, my child. I will be your father, and will take care of you until I can give you back to your own parents. From this time call me only father."

The old man then set some bread and milk before his guests, and when the young shepherd had eaten and drunk, he took his staff and prepared to leave. The child was very unwilling to part with him; he cried and held him by the hand; but when he promised to come back soon, and gave him the lamb, the child was contented, and was delighted with the present which, in his eyes, was of great value.

When the youth had gone, the old man placed the child on the bench by him, that

he might question him more closely. "My dear child," he said, "do you know nothing of your father and mother?"

"Oh, yes," said Ernest, "I have a beautiful mother here, in my pocket."

He took out the little picture, and never having seen it before by daylight, was delighted at its beauty, and the glitter of the diamonds that surrounded it. "How bright everything here is!" he said. "But tell me," he added, pointing to the sun, "who has lit that gold lamp up there, which makes everything so bright? I cannot even look at it. The lamp in our cavern was quite dull and gloomy. And how is it that it gets up higher and higher? When I first saw it, it was just behind the trees, and now it is so high that I could not reach it if I climbed up the highest tree. And what is it that holds it up? I cannot see any string. And who can get up so high to give it fresh oil?"

Father Meurad told him that the bright light was called the sun, and that it had been burning many, many years before Ernest was born, and never needed a single drop of oil.

"I cannot at all understand that," said Ernest. "But what beautiful flowers you have!" continued he; "they are all painted red, and yellow, and blue. And who can have cut out all these leaves? and what can they be made of?—not paper, nor silk either. Did you make all these flowers? What a long time it must have taken! and what fine scissors, and sharp eyes you must have! I can make flowers, but not like these."

Meurad told him that no one had made the flowers, but that they grew of themselves out of the ground. This Ernest would not at first believe; then the old man showed him the seed-vessel of a poppy, and shaking the round tiny seeds into his hand, told him that from such seeds came a number of large scarlet flowers, after the seeds had been laid in the ground.

The boy looked at the old man to see if he were in earnest. "Can those large flowers come out of these little seeds?" said he; "they must be more difficult to make than a gold watch." "Indeed it



Father Meurad telling Ernest how things grow.

must be," said Meurad. "But," asked the child, "who can have made the seed? I should think it would be easier to make all the flowers than to make one such little seed."

CHAPTER VII.

While they were talking, the sun gradually became hotter and hotter. "What a heat that lamp gives!" said the boy. "It

is so far off, and yet it makes us so warm; it is a wonderful light!" Meurad took the child under the apple-tree which sheltered the bench and the table. "It is cool and pleasant here," said Ernest, looking at the tree: "this tree is like a green shade, which shelters us from the heat as well as the light. How large it is, and what a number of leaves it has! The stem, I see, is made of wood. But I cannot think that you can have made all these leaves and flowers; that would indeed be too hard work."

After a while, the old man went into the hut, and prepared a meal for the child and for himself—some bread and apples, and a large melon. Ernest enjoyed the fruit very much, and said to the old man, "But how do you get all these nice things? do you go out to rob?" Father Meurad told him how wonderfully everything grew. "See," said he, "these apples came from this tree, and the tree grew from a little seed like this," showing him an apple-pip. "And the bread too came from seeds like this," he continued, showing the boy an ear of corn. "And so it is with everything that grows—the grass under our feet, the rose-bushes, the wheat, the vine which covers the side of the hut, the large oaks, and fir-trees upon the mountain, and the soft moss here round the trunk of the apple-tree; they all grow, or at least might grow, from such little seeds." All this was very wonderful to the boy, and he was as much astonished at the words of the old man, as he had at first been by the new sights which surrounded him.

By this time the sun was declining, and the flower-beds lay in shade. Some of Meurad's favourite flowers were drooping with the heat, and although he hoped it might rain soon, yet he thought it best to water them; so, taking his water-can, he led the boy to a spring which flowed plentifully from a moss-covered rock.

"What a quantity of water," Ernest cried, "and all running out of a stone! Every moment I think it must leave off, but it still flows as fast as ever. Who has poured such a quantity of water in? and where do you get enough to fill it? You should shut up the opening, and be more careful of the water, or you will have none

left." Meurad told him that the water had been flowing as long as the sun had shone, that it never left off, and never needed a fresh supply. He told him too that the lake, which he had taken for a large looking-glass, was nothing but water. This was a new wonder to the boy.

When Meurad returned with his water-can he began to water his flowers. "Oh, what are you doing?" said Ernest; "you will wash all the colour off your flowers!" Meurad said, smiling, that water was as necessary for plants, as drink was for ourselves. "But," said Ernest, "who can ever water all these things? how can any one get up high enough to water the trees that grow on the mountain?" Meurad said, "That is provided for; and you will see—perhaps sooner than we think," added he, looking up at the sky.

After a while there came a cloud over the mountain, and it began to rain. This was yet another wonder to the child. "That is a very good plan," said he, "and saves a great deal of trouble. The water falls down in drops, as if it came from a water-can. But where do those things that you call clouds come from? and how is it that they hang there without falling?" "That you shall hear presently," said Meurad. Then the child watched the clouds until they were dispersed, and the sky was bright and blue again.

And so the day passed quickly away, while Ernest was lost in wonder at all that he saw. A thousand things which we hardly notice, from being so used to them—a bright green beetle upon a rose-leaf, a snail which crawled out after the rain, the sparkling drops that hung like diamonds upon the leaves, a linnet which sang its evening song upon the branch of a tree, the hermit's goats, which came in the evening back from the mountains, were all new wonders to the child, and gave occasion for numberless questions and answers.

At last the sun disappeared below the lake. "Oh," exclaimed Ernest, quite frightened, "the water will put the lamp out! we shall be in the dark, and all our pleasure will be over! Even if we could light a lamp of our own, it would be of no

use in this large, wide space." But Father Meurad consoled him. "Do not be uneasy," he said; "we shall soon go to sleep, and then we shall not need a light. When we awake in the morning, the sun will appear again on the opposite side between the mountains. And so it goes on day by day, without stopping for a moment, and lightens and warms everything."

CHAPTER VIII.

Ernest still kept returning to his questions, which the wise old man would not answer at once, wishing to excite the child's curiosity. "But how is it," he asked again, "that the sun goes on moving? And who has built the large arch over our heads, and painted it such a beautiful blue colour? Who has put so much water in the rock, that it always flows? Who guides the clouds, and makes them water all the green things with those sparkling drops? Who teaches the birds to sing such pretty songs without a flute? Who has hidden the flowers and trees in the little seeds, so that we can cover the ground with a soft carpet, and have everything we need? Who has arranged it all so very wisely?"

"So you really think," said Father Meurad, "that there must be some one who has made all these wonderful things?"

"Oh yes, certainly," said Ernest. "It would be very foolish to doubt that. The men in the cavern were obliged to work for a long time when they wanted to make it a little larger. Once, part of it fell in, and then they had a great deal of trouble to build it up again. And this large arch has not even a single pillar to hold it up. Our lamp would never light itself, and we were always obliged to put in fresh oil. And we should have died of thirst, if we had not kept the water-cask full of water. And what a trouble it must have been to cut out all those flowers! I am quite sure no man could have made all the things that I see round me. But whatever it can be that has made them, I cannot at all understand."

And now that the boy showed himself so much struck with the greatness, beauty, and wise arrangement of the world, and

was full of curiosity to know who the great Benefactor might be, to whose goodness and wisdom it was all owing, the old man felt that the time had come when he might speak to him of the power, wisdom, and loving-kindness of God. With deep reverence he told the child that he was right; that there was One who had made all, and that this Almighty, All-wise, All-loving Being, whom we call God, was our dear Father in heaven, and to Him we owe our life and everything we possess.

The words of the old man darted like a ray of light through the mind of the child, and the thought of God awoke more wonder and delight in his soul than even the first sight of the morning sun.

"Yes, dear child," continued Meurad, "it is God who has made all that you see. He has built the blue arch which we call heaven; He has lighted the sun and directs its course: it not only shows us the wonders of His works, and lights us upon our way, but by its warmth the fruits become ripe, as food is cooked at a fire. He makes the water spring out of the ground and drop from the clouds to refresh us and give us drink; He spreads the carpet of grass at our feet; He gives scent and colour to the flowers; He loads the branches of the trees with all kinds of fruit; He teaches the birds their songs to cheer us; He clothed the lamb which is resting at our feet with soft wool, of which your dress and mine are made; He gives us all that we need for life and comfort; He has made everything so beautiful, that we may have pleasure in His works and love Him, and live with Him at last in a still more beautiful country, where we shall enjoy still greater happiness. And although we cannot see Him now, yet He sees us, and hears every word we say, and even knows our thoughts. We may speak to Him every moment; He rules every action of our lives; He set you free from the cavern and led you to me; He is our best Friend, our most loving Father."

Ernest listened to the pious old man with the greatest attention, and kept his eyes firmly fixed on him. While they were talking the night came on, but the

child never noticed it. The lake looked like a bright mirror, in which one seemed to see a second sky, with moon and stars. A solemn stillness reigned over all, and not a leaf moved on the trees. A new feeling which he had never before felt—a feeling of devotion, of nearness to God, filled Ernest's heart; and the old man folding his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven, uttered aloud a few words of prayer, while the boy, for the first time in his life, clasped his hands in prayer, and followed the old man's words. And when he had ended, the child, to the great delight of the pious old man, added of his own accord these words—'I thank Thee, O God, that Thou hast taken me from the dark cavern, and led me to this good man, who has taught me to know Thee!'

Father Meurad then led the boy to his cell, and spreading a couch of soft moss, covered him with his own mantle.

(To be continued.)

MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

REBEKAH.



In the story of Sarai we saw how her excessive love for her own child led her to be harsh and unkind to Hagar and Ishmael; in the story of Rebekah, which we have now to tell, we shall see a mother's excessive fondness for one son leading her to deal

unjustly with his twin brother, to deceive her blind and aged husband, and to tempt her favourite son to sin against God, by both acting lies and telling lies.

The way in which Rebekah's marriage with Isaac was brought about (as we read of it in Genesis xxiv.), shows that she was then of a character fit to be the wife of one of God's most favoured servants. When she was in sore trouble, before the birth of her twin-sons, *she went to inquire of the Lord* (Gen. xxv. 22), and, in answering her, God told her that of her sons *the elder shall serve the younger*.

As Rebekah's two sons grew up, they

were very different in many ways; Esau was a *cunning hunter, a man of the field*, delighting in deeds of daring and in bold adventures. Jacob was a *plain man*, a sober and serious man, *dwelling in tents*: staying at home, tending the flocks and herds, and attending to those household duties which made him helpful to his mother, and made him still more her favourite. Esau was bold and reckless, Jacob was cautious and keenly watchful for his own gain.

The 'right of the first-born son,' and the solemn 'blessing' of a father at the close of his life, were two things which in those times were counted of great value. One day *Esau came from the field, and he was faint*, and saw Jacob making pottage in the tent, and he asked him to give it to him; and Jacob said, *Sell me this day thy birthright*: and Esau sold his birthright for one morsel of meat (Heb. xii. 16).

One part of 'right of the first-born son' was to be the priest of the family and to offer sacrifices; and so, in despising his birthright, Esau made light of God's honour and service, and therefore he is called in the New Testament '*a profane person*' (Heb. xii. 16).

Isaac probably did not know that Jacob had made this unbrotherly bargain with Esau; but Rebekah would know it, and this would make her anxious that her favourite son should also have his father's solemn blessing as well; and it is in planning this that her foolish fondness led her into much that was very wicked.

When Isaac was so old that he felt that any day he might die, he called Esau to him and told him to take his quiver and his bow, and to go and seek for some venison, and then to make savoury meat, that he might eat it and give him his solemn and final blessing.

When Rebekah heard this she was not pleased, for she wished Jacob to have the blessing; so she told Jacob to bring her *two good kids of the goats*, and she made them into the savoury meat which Isaac liked: and she took *goodly raiment of her son Esau, and put it on Jacob, and put the skins of the kids upon his hands, and on the smooth of his neck*, that he might pass



' And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau.'



Alice and Mollie feeding their Donkeys.

better for his brother, who was a hairy man, and she sent Jacob into the presence of his father: and when Isaac asked, *Who art thou my son?* Jacob said, *I am Esau, thy first-born. I have done according as thou badest me; arise, I pray thee, sit and*

eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

Isaac said, *How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?* and Jacob answered with another lie, *Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.*

Then Isaac told his son to come near to him, and *he felt him*, for he was blind, and he smelled his raiment; and then he said, *The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau; and he said, Art thou my very son Esau?* And Jacob was not moved by this touching appeal of his aged father, but he lied yet again, and said, *I am.*

Then Isaac ate the meat and drank the wine which his deceitful son had brought him, and he kissed him and blessed him, and told him what should happen in future time, for God taught Isaac to prophesy.

When Jacob had *scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau came in from his hunting.* Then Jacob's deceit was known, and his father was greatly troubled, and *trembled exceedingly*; and Esau was very grieved, and *lifted up his voice and wept.* And he *hated Jacob*, and *said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand*, and when he is dead, *then will I slay my brother Jacob.*

These words of Esau were repeated to Rebekah, and she sent for Jacob, and told him that he must go away to Haran, and stay with her brother Laban there until Esau's anger was turned away, and until he forgot the wrong that had been done him.

So Jacob set out for a distant land, not for a few days, as Rebekah hoped, but for many years of hard service and anxious toil.

What became of Rebekah, or when she died, we know not. The Scriptures record the death of Deborah, her nurse (Gen. xxxv. 8), but they drop Rebekah's own name in silence, as if in pity for her weakness and her sin.

It is thought that this fond and foolish mother never again saw her favourite son; and though we hope that she so repented of her sin as not to suffer for it the bitterness of eternal woe, yet she suffered on earth the greatest punishment that a mother can feel, namely, the prolonged and hopeless absence of the child who was the idol of her heart.



THE CRUEL DONKEY DRIVER.

YOUNG man, don't beat that poor donkey so hard!" said a lady one day to a rough man who was thrashing a lean, overloaded donkey with all his strength.

"He's mine," growled the man, "and I've a right to do what I like with him."

"No man has any right to be cruel to any of God's creatures," rejoined the lady; "but what will you take for your donkey?"

"Two pounds," replied the man.

"Two pounds is a large sum to give for a donkey, which looks so worn-out and so sick as yours," said the lady; "but I will give it you for the sake of getting the poor creature out of your hands."

"As you like," muttered the bad man, with a sneer.

So this lady bought the poor donkey, which was soon relieved of its load and led to her door.

"Oh, a donkey! a donkey! Won't it be nice to ride on?" cried rosy-faced Alice, the lady's little daughter.

"That's only the skeleton of a donkey," shouted Neddie, a jolly-looking boy of twelve. "He's a regular Barebones. I think if he was to run a race with a snail, the snail would beat. I wouldn't give my black puppy-dog for that dying donkey."

This was meant to be funny talk, but I think it was rude and not respectful to their mother. The lady felt it to be so. With a grave countenance she said,—

"I bought that donkey for two reasons. First, I wanted to take it from the hands of a cruel man; and I thought that if treated kindly and fed well it would soon be strong, and then my fat little Alice and sickly little Mollie could ride side by side."

"Oh! thank you so much, mother dear," said pale-faced Mollie, who had crept from the sofa to the window-seat to look at the donkey. "I think the donkey will soon get fat in our meadow, and then we will have nice times riding him."

The lady kissed Mollie, and told Neddie to tell John to rub down the donkey and then to put him in the meadow. Neddie went out to the stable, and said to the servant-man, "John, go to the front door and lead Barebones round here."

"Who's Barebones?" asked John.

"You'll see," replied Neddie, laughing.

John soon returned with the poor donkey. "Yes, Master Neddie," said he, "his bones are bare enough, but he's a good donkey for all that. The creature has been starved, whipped, and overworked by some brute of a man who isn't fit to own a dog. I'll soon bring him round so that you will be proud to ride him."

"Maybe I shall and maybe I shan't," said Neddie, as John began combing and brushing the donkey.

John was as good as his word. The children used to feed him, and the poor donkey soon began to improve. His hair became glossy, his ribs were covered with flesh, his eyes grew bright, and in two months there was not a handsomer donkey in the neighbourhood. Alice named him Johnny Plump, and even Neddie confessed that it wouldn't do to call him Barebones any more.

Thus you see what kindness did for a donkey. Oh, there is nothing like kindness! It is good for children as well as for animals. I have seen boys treat cats and dogs, and even ponies and donkeys, with cruelty. But I never knew any boy who was cruel to a dumb animal to be kind to his brothers, sisters, or companions. Did you?

I think you never did, because cruelty hardens the heart. It freezes up all gentle and loving feelings.

Don't be unkind, then, my children, even to a fly or a worm. Never take pleasure in seeing any creature, however mean, suffer pain. If you must kill noxious insects or animals, do it quickly. Never torment anything. On the contrary, be kind to everything—to birds, to animals, and especially to each other. Never give pain, either by word or act, to any one if you can help it. Treat all your friends gently. Then you will grow lovely, loving, and beloved.

NEW ZEALAND GIRLS.

A FEW years ago all the New Zealanders were savages; but, by the teaching of Missionaries, many of them became Christians.

What a good thing! Yes; but, as may be supposed, there was a good deal of the old wild spirit left in them, which often broke out. Old habits are not very easily changed; but of the *children* of the New Zealanders who were born after their parents learnt the true religion, there is good hope, both because they have never seen heathenism in its worst form, and also because they go to Christian schools. The picture represents a group of female scholars in New Zealand—at least, three out of the four figures are such; the fourth one, who is the farthest off, under the window, being an old woman still a heathen. Compare the expression on her face with that on the faces of the three girls.

The people of New Zealand use neither tables nor chairs. Brought up to sit or squat upon the ground, a chair would be useless to them. It will be observed that the girls wear neither stockings nor shoes, nor have they anything like a frock. Their dress is a long cloak, made of grass or rushes, with an ornament woven into it for a border. These cloaks are really not so rude as one might think: they are very strong, often handsome, and always soft and warm. The young people have not yet taken to caps or bonnets, their thick bushy hair hardly requiring a cover. The old people pour oil, mixed with red ochre, upon their heads for ornament; but we are sure the girls before us have learned more cleanly habits at school.

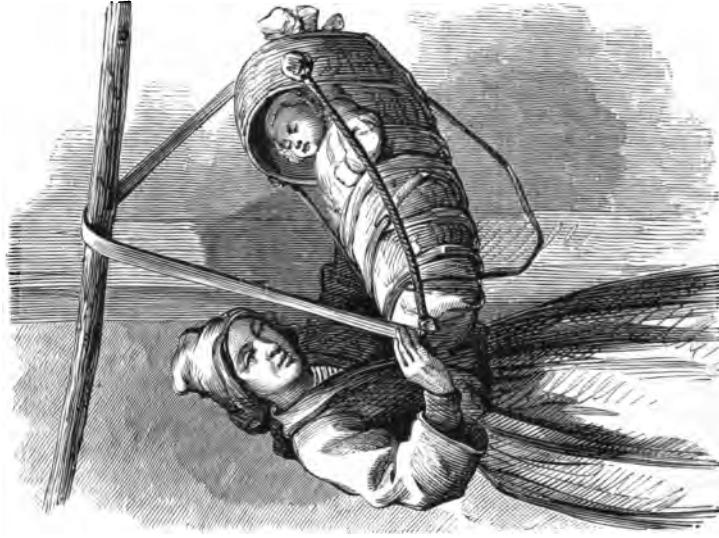
A boy in a New Zealand school having behaved very badly, was turned out. After his dismissal he wrote to the master as follows, only, of course, in his own language:—"Mr. Brown, my father, who hast forsaken thy child, hear the word of the Lord—"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." This is another word—"Overcome evil with good;" and this is another—"Let love be without dissimu-



New Zealand Girls.

lation," I have no more to say. From your scholar Gwaro,

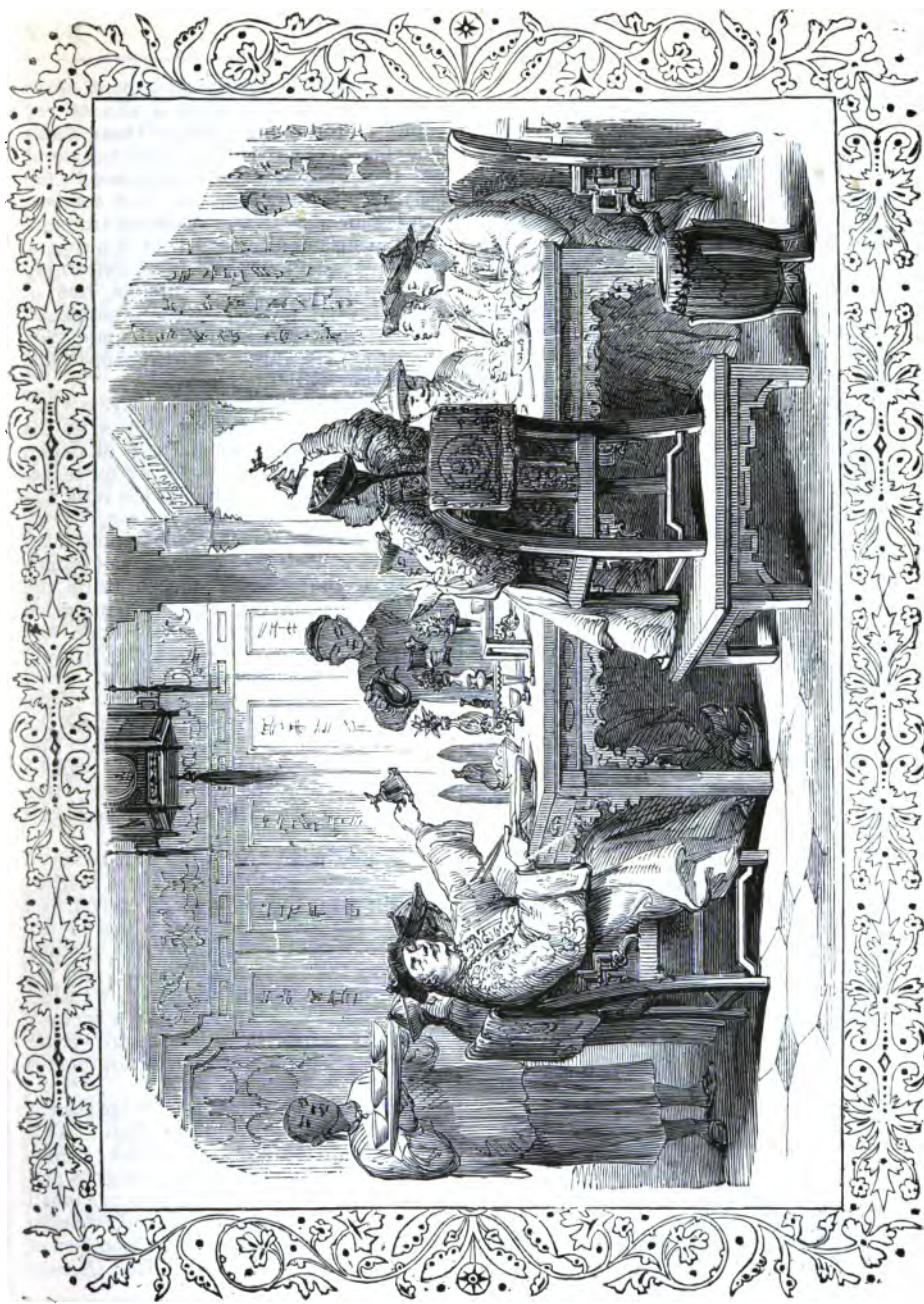
This letter shows us that the school-children of far-off New Zealand can write a letter and quote Scripture as well as any child in an English school. B.



Lapp Mother and Baby.

THE LAPPS.

MOTHERS in Lapland swing their children in cradles very different from those we use at home. The infant is swaddled up in clothes, which are bound round



with bands made of rein-deer skin ; one of these thongs is passed over a beam, as you see in the picture, and the little one swings like a sailor in his hammock. If it is restless or cries, the mother comes and swings it to sleep with a lullaby.

It is only in infancy that the Lapland child receives much comfort. When the baby, if it is a boy, grows up, he will be a hunter. If the baby is a girl, she will have a hard lot of it when she becomes a woman. She will have to do very hard work all day long. Still, 'the heart does not grieve after what the eye does not see,' and the poor Lapp female may be very happy in her way.

Lapland is one of the coldest countries of the earth. Its shores are bounded—we cannot say washed—by the Frozen Sea. Snow lies for most of the year upon the ground. There are no towns, and hardly any villages. The people live by hunting and fishing.

One great blessing they possess, however, and that is the rein-deer. To the poor Lapps the rein-deer is everything. Its flesh gives them food, its milk cheese, its skin clothing, and its sinews cord and thread. A rein-deer itself can live upon almost anything ; it can discover a bit of moss under the deep snow by the scent, and when harnessed to the sledge moves over the snow with great swiftness, sometimes, it is said, going over 200 miles in a day.

The rein-deer is white, and about as large as a pony. Its horns are covered with short hair, which it will not allow to be touched. There are two of them now in the Zoological Gardens in London, who look very miserable in their iron enclosures, where they have only a few blades of grass to nibble. If they have any thought, they must be thinking of the boundless plains of Lapland, and the freedom they would have there.

B.

VISITING IN CHINA.

THE Chinese are a very complimentary people, and especially so when they pay or receive visits.

The invitation to dinner is sent some days before, written upon a slip of red paper, and running thus :—'Dzan Tsai's compliments : a trifling entertainment waits the light of your countenance.' On the day of the feast, the host sends a servant for his guests. A dinner amongst the upper classes consists, not of puppies, birds'-nests, and rats and mice, swimming in hog's lard, as some suppose, but of courses of hot rolls and cakes, sweetmeats, poultry, pork, kid, and, lastly, soup, fish, and rice. The guests eat with chopsticks, which they call 'nimble lads.'

When a Chinese gentleman pays a visit, his servant runs before him with his master's card—a long red slip of paper, which is folded once, twice, or more, according to rank ; the higher the rank the more the folds. On it is written, 'Your humble servant So-and-So bows his head in salutation.' If the persons be not equals in rank, the inferior one performs the *koutou*—that is, he goes down upon his knees and strikes his forehead upon the ground. If they are equal, they simply cross hands on the breast and bow. Then come the compliments in a string. 'Your condescension has permitted me to see the interior of your honourable mansion.' 'You have brought fragrance with you,' will be the reply. 'Ah,' the first will rejoin, 'this day is the most exalted of your servant's life.'

The apartment where guests are received is a handsome one. The floor is of marble, in patterns ; the pillars are carved and gilded ; the doorways and windows are round or oval, as shown in the picture, revealing the landscape without ; and the ornamented lantern is never wanting. Refreshment is brought in by a servant. The host points to it, bows, and invites his guests (who, by the way, do not remove their caps) to partake.

There is one thing in the apartment which would give a Christian pain. This is the board on which stand the 'household gods,' idols of wood, incense-pots, and the ancestral tablet. This last is a small upright piece of wood on a stand, whereon are engraved the names of the members of the family who are dead. The Chinese

believe that part of the souls of the dead go into these tablets, and so they are greatly honoured and adored.

W.

A NOBLE DOG.

MY eldest son was walking over the fields in the country, a long way from any dwelling, when he was pursued by a fierce, big dog belonging to the gentleman whose land he was crossing. The lad was alarmed, and ran for his life. He struck into a wood, but the dog gained fast upon him; when he looked round to see how near the dog was, and stumbling over a stone, he fell and broke his leg. Unable to move, the poor boy saw the dog coming down upon him, and expected to be seized and torn; when, to his surprise, the dog came near, seemed to notice that the boy was hurt, instantly wheeled about, and went off for that help which he could not give himself.

The dog went off to the nearest house and barked for help. Unable to arrest attention, he made another visit of sympathy to the boy, and then ran to the house, there showing such signs of anxiety that the family followed him to the place where the lad lay.

This dog was pursuing the boy as an enemy; but the moment he saw his enemy prostrate and in distress, his rage was turned to pity, and he flew to his relief. And he showed both true feeling and good judgment. He was a dog of heart and head. Very few men—not all Christians—help their enemies when they are down. Some do not help their friends when they fall. This dog was better than many men who claim to be good men. I do not say that he reasoned in this manner, but there is something in his conduct on this occasion that looks so much like the right kind of feeling and action, that I think it deserves to be recorded to his credit. As I suppose that very few dogs will look at this record, I commend the example to all good folk, young and old, as one which they may well copy.



THE KIDS.

ALES and Scotland boast of goats, wild or half-wild ones, and also tame ones; but, as I have not been in either of these parts of Great Britain, I do not know whether they are there as useful to the household as they are in Germany. In England, one only meets

with the goat in cow-sheds, livery stables, and at the chaise-stands of watering-places.

It is very pretty to watch the pranks of little kids. They think nothing of scrambling on the back of their mother, whether she be lying down or standing. If the ground is wet they will even go to sleep on their mother's back. As a well-fed goat has more milk than is required for the kids, they are sometimes put for a time under a hen-coop, or anything which will prevent their sucking. The old goat then lies down at the side of their prison, and they seem to be comforted by their mutual presence. How boisterously happy they are when released, after the housewife has taken her share of the milk. I have seen goats in Germany who gave nearly two quarts of milk a-day; but then they had no kids to feed. There they are the friends of the poorer villagers, who have no land of their own. They cut food for their goats in hedges and ditches, or at the road-side. How often do I wish, when they trim the luxuriant hedges of the moist and sappy English fields, it were possible that the lean, starving goats of those poor German villagers might be able to have the juicy shoots and cuttings that are swept up as road-dirt and thrown away.

Fully to feel this, one must have seen, as I have, the poor faithful animals that 'bah' at their empty rafter or manger, to which they are tied by a short chain; while the children of their owners, or perhaps the poor old widow to whom they belong, painfully gather the scanty herbage, which is doled out to them in very



small quantities indeed, and in return for which they yet give abundant milk; but they look like living skeletons sometimes. The well-to-do peasants, I am sorry to say, look down upon those poorer villagers, and have a saying (at least in the neighbourhood which I visited) that 'if one of them

has seven florins at once in the house, the goat dies; for seven florins is about the price of one of these useful animals, and the meaning of the saying is that the luck of such wealth is too great not to be followed by such a serious misfortune as the loss of the goat would be.

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

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[One Penny.



A Puppy, from Life by F. W. KEVL.

A PUPPY.

THERE are two books in which many little people, and grown-up people too, take much interest—the *Children's Prize* and its big offshoot *Chatterbox*. I was once a child, and have got children now myself; and I find that my children are very fond of a story, just as I was myself long ago, and as I am still. I find, too, that my children like the story all the better, if a certain question which is asked with very wide open eyes can be only answered with Yes—that question being, *Is that true?*

Another thing which children like is to hear something which has really happened to those to whom they listen.

Now, the little story I am going to tell is true, and I saw it myself. It is about a Baby Dog, commonly called a Puppy. There is a charm about young things; a hope of growth, of life, of enjoyment; more than all, a look of innocence and trust, which is lost as they grow older.

The engaging kitten becomes often a thick-headed, vulgar-looking Tom. The quaint, unsuspecting, trustful pup, a snarling cur—the charm is gone. Every bad man was once a harmless, sinless baby. But what is *our* Pup going to be? Why, I should say, a smart, brown and black terrier—ready for anything and anybody. To play with a child and to bark at a thief. To fetch and to carry, to bite and to worry—rat, mouse, or cat, no matter what. It all depends (as with human babies) on the company he keeps, on the education he gets. The Puppy was drawn from a real one, named *Browney*, which has a bulldog among its ancestors. And, mind you, that is no harm, since a bulldog (in good society) is a very quiet, harmless dog, most faithful and affectionate. Only when roused and trained to fight, he becomes savage and dangerous.

Well, Browney has grown up to be a sleek-looking, glossy, parlour pet; often allowed to jump on the sofa—never better pleased than when asleep on the skirt of its mistress's dress. A capital watch-dog, with the courage of a lion, although so small. When a hobbledehoy dog, it led a

fine pug who lived in the same home a sad life, from its perpetual rough play. But it grew out of that, and only displays its sleeping powers of fighting when it thinks the house or a friend in danger.

The other day I called at the house where Browney lives, leading a largish, old-fashioned hound, named Gypsy. Browney had never seen such long ears, such a wrinkly face, and such deep lips. The moment the door was opened, therefore, out it dashed, and the patient old hound, to my surprise, got very angry, and there was a scuffle. When the little dog was safely got out of the way, the children's quick eyes detected that Gypsy's nose bled. The old bulldog courage had come uppermost in Browney, and, true to its race, it had attacked its huge foe straight in front, and without counting the cost; for, most certainly, if she had not been held by a cord, Gypsy would have punished Browney severely, perhaps killed it. Browney's size compared with Gypsy was about the same as that of the old-fashioned bulldog to the bull, in the times when they were kept by wicked people to torture each other—a wicked use of stout hearts and noble courage. Browney, in the hands of low people, would have become a vulgar-looking, savage beast, given only to feeding and fighting. Instead of being the picture of sprightliness and cleanliness, it would be a foul-coated, skulking, shabby little imp, defiance and hatred marked in its face, selfishness taking the place of generosity and faithfulness. This shows how great is the influence of good companions and education even on a puppy-dog.

THE BETTER LAND.

A FATHER and mother were living with their two children on a desert island in the midst of the ocean, on which they had been shipwrecked. Roots and vegetables served them for food; a spring supplied them with water, and a cavern in the rock with a dwelling. Storm and tempest often raged fearfully on the island.

The children could not remember how they had reached the island; they knew

nothing of the vast continent ; bread, milk, fruit, and whatever other luxury is there, were things unknown to them.

There landed one day upon the island four dark-looking men in a small boat. The parents felt great joy, and hoped now to be rescued from their troubles ; but the boat was too small to take them over together to the adjoining land, so the father determined to risk the passage first.

Mother and children wept when he embarked in the boat with its frail planks, and the four men were about to take him away. But he said, 'Weep not ! it is better yonder ; and you will all follow soon.'

When the little boat returned and took away the mother, the children wept still more. But she also said, 'Weep not ! in the better land we shall all meet again.'

At last came the boat to take away the two children. They were frightened at the men, and shuddered at the fearful sea over which they had to pass. With fear and trembling they drew near the land. But how rejoiced they were when their parents appeared upon the shore, offered them their hands, led them into the shade of lofty palm-trees, and regaled them upon the flowery turf with milk, honey, and delicious fruits ! 'Oh ! how groundless was our fear !' said the children ; 'we ought not to have feared, but to have rejoiced, when the men came to take us away to the better land.'

'Dear children,' said their father, 'our voyage from the desert island to this beautiful country, should teach us a lesson about another and a still longer voyage to a much more beautiful country which is before us. The whole earth, on which we dwell, is like an island. The land here is indeed a noble one in our eyes, although only a faint shadow of heaven. The passage thither, over the stormy sea, is death ; that little boat resembles the bier, upon which men in black apparel shall at some time carry us forth. But when that hour strikes, then we, myself, mother, or you, must leave this world. So fear not. Death, for those who have loved God and have done His will, is nothing else but a voyage to the better land.'

THE OLD TOMBSTONE.

SACRED to the Memory of —.' Yes, those are the only words legible on this old tombstone. It had a long inscription once, but you cannot make it out now, for time has worn it all away ; there is not even the name left ! Many years have rolled past since this stone was first put up ; and no one, I dare say, but myself, could tell whose remains lie beneath it.

Shall I tell you the story which I heard from my grandfather about it ? It is a short one, and a very simple one ; but it may, perhaps, do you good.

My grandfather was a wood-cutter. His name was Ralph Price. He was a truly good man, and had received a better education than his neighbours, so that he was much looked up to by them all. And he was a great favourite, too, at the Grange, where Squire Belton lived. Squire Belton was the master for whom he worked, and a kind master he was ; one who knew how to value a good servant. But it is his son, Master Harry, as he was called, whom I am going to talk about. He was a fine clever lad, full of health and spirits, and very fond of my grandfather. He used often to run down to our cottage to chat with my grandfather, and watch him at his work.

They got on very well together. Master Harry used to like to talk about what he should do when he was a man ; sometimes it was one thing, and sometimes it was another ; but it was always something which was to make him famous in the eyes of the world. He wished to be a great man, so that he should not only be thought a great deal of while he lived, but be treasured up in people's memories for years and years after his death. Sometimes he would bring a book with him, and read to my grandfather the history of one of his favourite heroes ; and, when he had finished, his eyes would brighten, and he would exclaim, 'There, Ralph, now that is just what I mean to be. I intend to win for myself a name, as he did ; and, perhaps, Ralph, some day your children, and your grandchildren, will be talking about that wonderful man, General Belton, who did so much for his country.'



It was impossible to help being amused with such speeches as these, and my grandfather loved the lad so dearly, that he was interested in all his boyish plans and fancies. Only, while he listened to them both with patience and willingness, he often tried to edge in a word which might draw Harry's thoughts to better things, and give him a nobler object of pursuit.

Well, time went on, until Master Harry was Master Harry no longer, but a tall, handsome young man, who had made up his mind to go into the army. And so he became a soldier; and he looked, as you may suppose, very well in his uniform. After a time his regiment was ordered abroad, and he came to bid my grandfather good-bye. 'Good-bye, Ralph,' he said; 'I hope I shall have done something worth your hearing of before I come back again.'

'Ah, sir,' said my grandfather, 'may God keep you safe, and grant that your name may be written in the Lamb's book of life!'

They parted, and within a twelvemonth

the brave young officer returned to his native land—to die! A rapid consumption brought him quickly to the grave.

He sent directly for my grandfather, for he felt that he could speak more freely to the friend of his boyhood than to any one else. Poor fellow! his family were gay, worldly people, who made light of religion; and he felt now the need of having something better than a name which was highly esteemed among men. He died in my grandfather's arms, and he died in peace, for he had learnt to know and love his Saviour.

'Ah, Ralph,' he said, in his last moments, alluding to his former conversations, 'a name in heaven is better than a name on earth.'

Yes, his name is indeed nearly forgotten on earth. It can hardly be made out on his moss-grown tombstone! But this is of little moment now that his record is on high, and that his name is in the Book of God's remembrance.



THE WREN.

HERE is a picture of 'the merry little Wren.' See how she brings food to her little ones who are all chirping together for something to eat. She will deprive herself of the dainty morsel to feed and nourish her children, who are as yet unable to assist themselves. What would become of these little chirpers, hidden in some hole of a decaying tree, or in the overhanging eaves of a deserted house, if their kind parent did not go and get food for

them. With what care and tenderness this mother seeks to comfort and supply the wants of her little children. She will not neglect them, she will brave danger for them, and she will not leave them until they are able to fly about and provide for themselves. Such is the love of mothers.

The Wren is a merry little bird, and sings its lively song during the most severe and cheerless weather. It is fond of company and is easily tamed.

A story is told of a lady who used to attract these little creatures to her garden by giving them plenty of bread-crumbs and other things. In very cold weather she noticed that several wrens would gather together upon the branch of a tree and pack themselves closely for the sake of warmth. Pitying their uncomfortable

condition, the kind lady procured a box which she lined with flannel, and in it made a small round hole which answered as a door-way. The box was fixed near the branch of the tree which was the roosting-place of the little birds, and they soon made use of it. The number of lodgers increased nightly, until at last more than forty wrens crowded into the box which seemed hardly large enough to contain half that number. When asleep the wrens would let the box be opened, and themselves handled without trying to fly away. These little creatures became so tame that they would come to the garden and crowd round the saucer containing food placed there for them. Kindness will always secure friends, and even dumb creatures are not forgetful or ungrateful for little acts of love.

MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

NAOMI.



N the days when the Judges ruled Israel, there lived in Bethlehem a man named Elimelech; and the name of his wife was Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion. And it came to pass that there was a famine in Bethlehem, and the country round about, so Elimelech took his wife and his sons with him, and went and settled in the land of Moab, where the people worshipped idols, and not the true God.

Before long, Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons, who both married women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth, and they dwelled there about ten years.

Then fresh trouble came on Naomi, for Mahlon and Chilion died also, both of them, and the woman was left desolate and poor in a strange land, amongst those who worshipped strange gods. No wonder then, when she heard that the Lord had visited her people in giving them bread, that the famine was over, and that there was now plenty

in Bethlehem, she set out to return to her own land. Naomi had been so good a mother, that her daughters-in-law started to go with her; but Naomi said unto them, *Go, return each to her mother's house. She blessed them, and said, The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.*

But Naomi still begged them to turn again, and go home to their own people. And they wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and went back; but Ruth clave unto her, and said, *Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; only death shall part thee and me.*

When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her; so they two went till they came to Bethlehem.

We are sure that Naomi must have been a good mother, and must have shown in the land of the heathen that the service of the true God was much better than the worship of idols, or Ruth would not have been so steadfastly minded to leave her own kindred, and to go forth as a poor and lonely widow with her widowed mother-in-law to a distant land. Orpah at first intended to give up her idols and her kindred, but when she came to see the difficulties and dangers of the long journey, she gave way and went back; but Ruth not only loved Naomi, she loved Naomi's God, and resolved to serve Him, and so she bravely went with her mother-in-law to her old home in Bethlehem.

And when the two widows came into the city, there was great wonder at Naomi's return; and many who had known her before, seeing her so much altered, said, *Is this Naomi?* And she answered, *Call me not Naomi (which means 'pleasant'), Call me Mara (which means 'bitter'), for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.*

It was the time of harvest when Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem, and the people were all busy reaping their barley ; and Ruth, wishing to help her mother, proposed that she should go and glean in the fields ; and this shows that they were very poor, for though in those early times women of rank often did work that with us would be thought quite beneath them, yet gleaning was certainly left to those who were in poverty and distress, as we see by the laws of Moses, which said, *Thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest ; thou shalt leave them with the poor, and to the stranger* (Lev. xxiii. 22 ; and xix. 9).

All the people at Bethlehem were strange to Ruth, but God guided her to the right field, even to the field of Boaz, who was a near relation of Naomi's husband Elimelech.

And while Ruth was gleaning in this field, behold Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, *The Lord be with you ; and they answered him, The Lord bless thee*—(what pleasant words to pass between a farmer and his men !) And soon Boaz saw among the gleaners a young woman who was a stranger to him, and he said to his servant that was over the reapers, *Whose damsel is this ?* and the servant answered, *It is the Moabish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab.*

Then Boaz told Ruth to abide with his maidens, to follow them to the field that they reaped, and when she was thirsty to drink from the vessel prepared for them.

Ruth was surprised at such kindness to her, a stranger, and asked why Boaz was so good to her ; and he said, *It hath been fully shown me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou hast come to trust.*

At meal time Boaz told Ruth to sit with

his reapers, and gave her so much of the parched corn that she was able to save some to give to her good mother-in-law when she went home at eventide. As soon as Naomi saw what a quantity of barley Ruth had brought back, she asked her, *Where hast thou gleaned to-day ?* And when she heard how kind Boaz had been, Naomi said, *Blessed be he of the Lord Who hath not left off His kindness to the living and the dead.* And Naomi said to her, *The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.*

It was the custom of the Israelites that the nearest relation should buy back the inheritance of any man who had died, and should marry his widow. And at the end of harvest, Boaz called ten of the elders of the city together at the gate, which was the favourite place for meetings of business, and then he said to the nearest kinsman that it was his duty to buy from Naomi the parcel of land which was our brother Elimelech's, and to marry Ruth, the widow of his son Chilion.

But the man said that he did not wish to do so, and he asked Boaz, who was the next nearest relation, to buy it. So Boaz said to the elders, and unto all the people, *Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.* And Boaz married Ruth, and when a babe was born to them, Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse to it. The child's name was Obed, and he grew to be a man, and was father of Jesse, and grandfather of David, King of Israel ; and so the name of Ruth, the loving daughter of the pious mother, comes in what is called 'the genealogy' of Jesus, as you may see in St. Matthew, i. 5.

Thus God remembered His servant who trusted in Him ; and the mother who had had so much trouble, and sorrow, and hardship in a strange land, ended her life in wealth, peace, comfort, and honour among her own people, rejoicing in the happiness of her faithful daughter-in-law, and in the love of her little grandson.



'Entreat me not to leave thee.'

P. 54.



ERNEST OF FELSENBURG.

(Continued from page 39.)

CHAPTER IX.

FATHER Meurad kept the boy with him all the summer, that he might instruct him still more, and cure him of some bad

habits which he had learned among his former companions. He thought, too, that the simple food and fresh mountain air would restore his health, which had suffered from living so long underground.

Towards autumn, Father Meurad resolved to leave his lonely home, and go

forth to seek for the parents of the boy. But first he intended to take the child to the father of the youth who had first met him (an honest farmer who lived in the mountain), that he might be taken care of during his absence.

Early one fine autumn morning the old man awoke the child, and went with him to the chapel to pray for a blessing upon his journey. After they had breakfasted, and provided themselves with food for the journey, they set out, travelling at first in lonely footpaths, which were only frequented by shepherds and chamois-hunters. Towards midday they came to an overhanging rock, in whose shade they sat down to rest and refresh themselves.

Presently a little son of the goatherd came past and made his bow to Father Meurad. Ernest sprang up and cried out in astonishment—"Oh, look! there is a little man like myself. Oh, I never knew that there were any more little people: I thought I was the only one in the world. You will go with us, will you not?" The shepherd-boy begged to be allowed to carry Meurad's wallet, and went with them to the delight of the child, who talked much to his new companion.

Soon they came to a green valley, where a herd of sheep was grazing, and under the shade of a rock they saw a shepherdess sitting; she had in one hand a crook, and in the other she held a book, from which she was reading attentively. The look on her face was soft and gentle, but very sad. Meurad went up to her, and although they had never met before, she knew him by report, and rising, saluted him respectfully. Meurad said to her—"You cannot have been keeping this flock long. When I saw the owner lately he never mentioned you." She replied that she had kept sheep for some years in the mountains, but had only been in the service of her present master three days. "Where do you come from?" he asked, "and why do you look so sad?" At this question the girl burst into tears.

"Ah!" she said, "I come from a long way off. When I was young, a thoughtless action caused me great misery. I was in the service of a kind mistress, and care-

lessly left her only child for a few minutes alone; in my absence the child was stolen by robbers. I could not bear to see the grief of my mistress, and fled into the mountains. Here I live in loneliness, and pray daily to God that He will one day restore the child to his parents."

Father Meurad listened with deep attention, and said—"I think that God has even now heard your prayers;" and taking from his pocket the picture of Ernest's mother, which he carried with him, the more easily to discover the child's parents, he showed it to the girl and said—"Do you know this picture?" The girl uttered a cry of mingled fear and joy. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "it is the Countess of Felsenburg, the mother of the stolen child."

At the cry of the girl little Ernest came running up, and looking at the new figure with wondering eyes, said—"What is the matter, and why do you cry? Are you hungry? Here is some bread and an apple, will you eat them?"

"See," said Meurad, "this is the child who was stolen with the picture." Overpowered by the sudden joy, the girl sank on her knees, and raising her hands to heaven exclaimed—"O God, Thou hast heard my prayers, hear now my thanksgiving, which I am not worthy to offer unto Thee." Then embracing the child she exclaimed, "Can it indeed be true, or am I dreaming? Yes, it is the dear child himself! You are as like to your father as one dewdrop is to another. Oh, how delighted your mother will be to see you; and what pleasure to you to see your father and mother!"

Father Meurad was deeply moved at the meeting, and said, "God be praised, whose providence has so watched over this child. He has dried the tears of this poor girl, and will restore the child to his sorrowing parents. He has blessed the first steps of my journey, and spared me the fatigue of a long search. Praise be His name for ever, for His mercy and goodness."

Meurad then went with Ernest and Margaret to the cottage of the farmer, while the little shepherd-boy returned to his sheep. "Are these my father and mother?" asked Ernest, as the farmer and his

wife came to their cottage-door to meet them; he was very disappointed when he heard that they were not. "They look so kind," he said, "my father and mother could not be kinder; I should like to stay with them." They only remained here a short time, and continued their journey accompanied by the shepherd-boy, the son of the farmer. Towards evening they left the mountain and came to a village, where they passed the night. The following morning they hired a carriage and set out upon their journey, in the hope of reaching Felsenburg in three days.

CHAPTER X.

The first day of the journey passed quickly away. The pleasure of the drive, and the number of castles and villages which seemed to fly past the carriage, delighted Ernest beyond measure, and whenever he saw a castle upon a mountain in the distance, he always asked whether it was not Felsenburg.

Towards the evening of the second day they came to a thick wood, through which the road was so bad that travelling was almost impossible; the wind blew roughly, and the rain fell in torrents. They were obliged to take refuge in an inn in the midst of the wood, which was supposed to be full of robbers. Tired with the journey, they were all soon asleep excepting Meurad, who, having seen the child safe in his room, remained up praying and reading by the light of a taper.

All of a sudden there was heard a loud knocking at the doors, and men's voices demanded admittance. All in the house were startled out of their sleep, and Meurad left his room. "Oh," cried Margaret, meeting him, "I am afraid there are robbers, and the young Count will be stolen again!" Meurad quieted her, and went down, but the people of the inn were too much frightened to open the door; the men outside continued knocking, and threatened to break it in.

Meurad, with a calm and courageous voice, said—"The door cannot protect us; God alone is our shield; we are all in His hands." He then opened the door, and four fierce-looking armed men came in,

one of them carrying a lighted torch. "We must have every room in the house," they said; "our master will be here immediately, and the inn must be at his service." Meurad asked who their master was, and heard with as much surprise as joy that it was the Count Frederick of Felsenburg, Ernest's father. The Count had never left the army so long as the war lasted, but now that peace was declared he was on his way home.

The news of the declaration of peace filled all with joy, and the people of the inn vied with each other in attention to the soldiers; who excused themselves for their violent conduct on account of the weather. "In such a storm," they said, "even a soldier might be excused for not wishing to pass the night out of doors." They told, too, how they had lost themselves in the wood, and could not at first find the house, until they were guided to it by the burning light.

The fact that the taper by which he was praying so late should have led the Count's soldiers to the house, made a deep impression upon Meurad, who saw the hand of Providence in all things; and he thanked God heartily for the happy result.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE KING OUT-WITTED.

An Eastern Story.



OUR picture represents Sultan Beck and his family. This sultan is a very inferior monarch; his dominions are extensive, but his subjects are very few—only a single tribe of Tartars, who are scattered about the plains east of the

Black Sea.

The following story of a Sultan is found in an Arabian manuscript:—

There was once a sultan so gifted by God as to have the power of remembering anything when *once* it had been repeated over; and he had a Mameluke, or slave,



Sultan Beck and his Family.

who had the power of remembering anything which he had heard said *twice* over.

It is the custom in the East for a

king to bestow presents upon all persons who entertain him. This particular king very much liked to be entertained, but he liked his money

more; and, by his gift of a good memory, he contrived often to get his amusement for nothing. Whenever a poet came before him to repeat an ode



White Cattle of Chillingham Park.

Page 62

in the king's own praise, he would say to the man,—

‘Do you know the condition on which I listen to you? If the poem is your own

you shall have the weight of what it is written upon in gold; but if it is not your own, you are to pay me.’

The writers, knowing, of course, their

own poems to be their own, always began to write them in confidence ; and, filled as the verses were with the king's praises, they expected, of course, the reward. When they had done, the monarch would say,—

'That poem is not your own. I know it well ; listen.' And straightway they heard it back word for word.

'Oh, base man,' then said the king, 'to try to deceive me thus. Here is even a poor Mameluke who knows it too.'

And then the Mameluke, who had heard it twice, would repeat it correctly, and the poet was fined the pieces of gold.

So all the poets of that land gave up their calling, which proved so bad for them, and took to other things, and the king lacked amusement.

One day a new poet arrived from Bagdad, skilled in his art. He was told of the usual fate of the royal poets, and he guessed the reason. 'I will outwit the Sultan,' thought he, and prepared a very difficult ode, full of long words, having a jingle very different from all other Arabian poetry. He presented himself at the king's door, and was admitted.

The king, who had not heard a poem recited for a long time, was very pleased ; and, as usual, before the poet began, asked him if he knew the conditions.

'I do, O king,' the poet replied ; 'you are to give me the weight of what the poem is written upon, if it is my own.'

'True, O poet,' said the king ; 'and if it is not your own, you are to give me the gold. Is the Mameluke here ?'

The poet began, and chanted his poem so rapidly that the king looked puzzled. It was so full of change, and had such different burdens, and such hard words, that for once the king was mastered. It was a poem in defence of Truth.

During the recital, the king and the Mameluke exchanged frequent glances, and the king said, when the other had finished,—

'I do not think it is your own. I have a Mameluke here who can repeat it.'

'No, truly, O king,' said the slave ; 'I cannot repeat it. I have heard it only once.'

'Well, poet,' said the king, 'as it is your own, produce that upon which it is written, that it may be weighed.'

'Verily,' replied the poet, 'I will do so, if you will order your Mameluke to fetch it from the next chamber. It is heavy, and requires a slave to carry it.'

'To carry a paper !' cried the monarch. 'You are insulting. Is it not in the bosom of your dress ?'

'It is in the next chamber, as I have said,' replied the other. 'I had no paper to write it upon, and so I engraved it upon a stone. Is not the praise of Truth worthy to endure ?'

The king was obliged to submit. The stone was heavy, and its weight in gold quite exhausted the treasury until the next taxation.

The king learnt a lesson, and in future always rewarded poets without making any conditions as to the weight of their manuscript. W.

THE WILD WHITE CATTLE OF CHILLINGHAM PARK.



HAVE already told you of the smallest bird, the Golden-Crested Wren, and of the smallest wild animal, the Harvest Mouse, to be found in Great Britain ; and also of the tallest, the Red Deer. Now I should like to say something about the next largest, the Wild Ox, which at one time was to be found in many parts of our island, when it was covered with thick woods, and there were but few people. Then it was that the fierce wild white oxen lived in the recesses of the forest, and were hunted much as the deer still are ; but while we now find red deer in some parts of England, and in many parts of Scotland, the wild white oxen are only to be seen in Chillingham Park, in Durham, where they are allowed to range about.

Once when King Robert Bruce was hunting he was nearly killed by one of these wild animals, who set upon him, and

would have trampled him to death, had not some one who was near attracted the bull's attention to himself, and for thus saving the king's life he was called Turn-bull, which has become a common name in Scotland.

In the reign of Henry the Second of England, there was a large forest near London where many of these wild cattle were to be found.

And now let me tell you what they are like. They are very well shaped, have short legs and black horns, black eyes and eye-lashes, and the rest of the body is a whitish cream colour, except the muzzles and inside the ears, which are brown. Have you ever watched cows galloping about when first let out of their winter-sheds and turned into the green fields? They look very clumsy heavy creatures, not at all graceful. Our cows look best when they stand under the shade of the trees whisking off the flies with their long tasselled tails, or half-buried in the long grass chewing the cud; but the wild cows are graceful animals that move about under the guidance of the bulls, sometimes advancing one by one, and sometimes charging all together. They are very careful of their calves, hiding them in the woods as if they feared people wanted to take them away. One day a gentleman, Mr. Bailey, found a young calf, which was only two or three days old, and seemed very weak and thin. He went up to the poor little thing and stroked its tender white skin; but it soon showed its fierce nature, stepped back a little distance, and then ran at him to try and knock him down. He moved on one side out of its way, and it was so weak that it could not run any farther and fell down; so you see what wild little things they are, and how difficult it would be to make pets of them.

They do not bellow or *mo*, as children call the sound which the cows make, but have a cry sharper and more like that of a wild beast. They do not feed till towards evening and during the night; and if you happened to go near where they are lying down, they will get up and move off, hiding behind the hills in the park so as scarcely to be seen; but if you were to

press upon and hunt them, they would charge again and again, trying to trample upon and kill you.

They soon become old, and are not allowed to live over eight or nine years, when they begin to get weak and thin; so a keeper shoots those whom he knows ought to be killed, for he dare not go near them; and, if he happen only to wound the animal he has aimed at, he is obliged to take refuge behind a tree, and take great care lest he should be killed instead.

I fear there are not many of these beautiful wild animals left, for the disease which has destroyed so many of our cows came amongst and killed many of them; so I wish you to recollect something about the last animals of a race that once was found in all parts of our land, but has given place to the more useful cow, who supplies us with so many things that are necessary for us, and whose nature, through the goodness of our Heavenly Father, who supplies all His creatures with food, is so different to that of the Wild White Cattle of Chillingham.

ISABEL THORNE.

THE THREE CHILDREN.

THREE children were crouching under a wall,

Under a wall in the winter's night;
Their faces were pale, and their lips were blue,
And their half-frozen hands of a deadly hue,
And their eyes looked up with a hungry light.

Three children were nestled side by side,
Side by side through the weary hours;
They were dreaming of home, and a mother's care.

As their limbs lay cramped on the pavement bare,
They were dreaming of fields and flowers.

Dreaming of rest, and their country home,
Of their country home, and a parent's love
Side by side, with faces upturned,
As though in sleep they eagerly yearned
Towards the cold white stars above.

Three children were clustered hand-in-hand,
Hand-in-hand at the dawn of day;
But their eyes were closed, and their colour fled,
And their little bodies lay cold and dead,
And their souls had soared, oh! far away!

W. B.



The Three Children.

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No. V.]

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[One Penny.



Little Humpy.



LITTLE HUMPY.

STRANGE name—is it not?—for a little girl; and yet this is what the little girl I am going to tell you about was always called by the children in Elm Court, after she came to live there with her aunt.

Her real name was Annie, and till she was nine years old she had never been called by any other. She had been deformed, poor child, almost from babyhood by an accident; but in the quiet village where she lived every one pitied her, and all had a kind word for her. The first years of her life were most happy ones to the child, in spite of the pain she often had in her back. Those years were spent almost entirely with her mother, for she was an only child, and her father being a sailor in the Royal Navy was very seldom at home. Every now and then, however, he would come for two or three weeks, bringing beautiful presents for his wife and child, and making that little cottage indeed a happy place. It was hard work to part with him again after those visits.

"When will you stay with us always, father?" Annie asked, the last time he was with them.

"Not till mother is an old woman, my child—unless, indeed, I come back without a leg or an arm some day: perhaps that will be it."

"But 'mother' was not to live to be an old woman. Late in the autumn, after Annie's ninth birthday, a fever came into the village, and the child's mother was one of the first to take it. She was ill only a few hours, and then she died, leaving her little girl to the care of a kind neighbour, until her aunt could come to fetch her.

This aunt, Mrs. Home, was the sister of Annie's father. She was a widow, without children of her own, and very fond of her little niece; but as she was a charwoman she was obliged to be out all day in other

people's houses, so that the child could no longer be waited on and petted as she had been by her mother. The day after the funeral her aunt took her to London; and the child began a new life in a strange place.

Strange, indeed, it was to her who, till now, had lived in the free, open country, to be shut up in a little close court, with only a strip of sky above her head and flag-stones beneath her feet. For some days she did not venture out at all, but sat all the long day alone in the one room which her aunt rented on the ground-floor of the tall house. She would watch the children at their play, and wonder if she should ever care to play again; then she would sit down and have a good cry as she thought of her mother; and often, when her aunt came home of an evening, she would find the little girl lying asleep before the fire, with the tears on her cheek. At last one day, when all was very quiet in the yard, the children being at school or off to play in the streets, and the mothers busy indoors, Annie put on her bonnet and made her way to the entrance of the court. There was amusement enough for her as she stood there and looked up and down the busy street. She was wondering how the omnibus conductors could stand so safely on the step all the time the omnibuses were going on, and thinking that she must ask her aunt what these great carriages were called, when a clock not far off struck twelve. Almost as the last stroke sounded, from a bye-street, a little way down the principal one, a crowd of boys and girls came tearing at full speed, all shouting and talking at the top of their voices. Annie was so much amused with watching them make their way through the people that she did not notice several of them stopped at Elm Court, the entrance to which she was stopping up.

"Now, then, make way, will you?" said a big boy, pushing her roughly on one side, and at the same time Annie found herself driven along by the numbers who crowded after him into the yard.

"Why, it's the new girl," cried another boy, "what's come to live at Mrs. Home's. What's your name?" and he seized her by the arm.

Before Annie could answer a girl called out, "I'll tell you her name—you needn't ask it. She's little Humpy, all the world over."

"Little Humpy! little Humpy!" was passed from mouth to mouth, and soon the whole yard rang with the cry. Poor Annie! was this to be her treatment in her new home? She struggled to get free from the boy, who held her in a firm grasp. He only seized her other arm, and turned her face full to him, saying, "Yes, that's what you are—little Humpy; and now you may go;" and he pushed her from him with such force that Annie fell. He had been punished in school that morning, and being very cross, he was glad to find some one upon whom to vent his ill-temper.

The little girl, set free, found her way back to the lonely room from which she had come out, but the cruel cry of "Little Humpy" followed her even there. She shrank into a dark corner, and, crouching down, sobbed and cried till she was quite worn out, and could only moan, "Mother, mother! dear, dear mother!"

In this state Mrs. Home found her when she came in that evening. She took the child on her knee, and petted and soothed her; then she lighted the fire, which had long since gone out, and set the kettle on to boil, that they might have their tea, talking cheerfully all the time. "Annie, dearie," she said at last, "you shall begin to go to school on Monday: you will like that!"

"Oh, no! no!" cried the child, clinging tightly to her; "don't let me go to school—I'll learn at home, indeed I will."

"But, my dearie, I think going to school would be good for you. It is lonesome for you here, and you would have some play-fellows there."

"I don't want playfellows; they are cruel children here, Aunt Annie—very, very cruel;" and with a fresh burst of tears the whole story of the morning was told.

Mrs. Home looked very grave as she listened. She knew it would be useless to ask the children not to tease her little niece, and equally useless to speak to the parents. They were a bad set in Elm Court: should she move from there, and

take a room in some other place? But it might be the same anywhere else, and perhaps, after a time it would be better here; for a clergyman had lately come amongst them, who was doing his best to work a change for good. As she thought all this to herself, Annie once more spoke.

"Aunt," she said, "promise me I shan't go to school—that you won't let me go out without you."

"No, dear, you shan't indeed; not till you wish it yourself."

"I shall never do that," said Annie, with a deep sigh; but she was content with that promise, and, drying up her tears, found herself quite ready to make a meal of dinner and tea at once.

(To be continued.)

"IF YOU WERE THE WIND?"

Boy. "If you were the wind, oh, say, where would you blow to?"

Girl. "Where those I love best are, you know I would go to."

Boy. "If they didn't like buffeting, what would you do?"

Girl. "I would steal to them gently, and whisper adieu."

Then I'd sweep o'er the flowers, and bend each bright head,

Till the air should be sweet with the fragrance they shed.

Then back to my loved one I'd hasten, and say,

'Oh! is not poor Zephyr more welcome to-day?'

Boy. "If I were the wind, to the desert I'd rush,

Where only my voice could disturb the deep hush:

I would whirl up the sand till it darkened the sun,

I would howl to myself, and then laugh at the fun."

Girl. "If I were the wind, to the sea I would fly,

And would sweep the dark clouds from the face of the sky;

Then strongly and steadily on I would blow, Speeding navies and fleets on the way they would go.

A good useful 'Trade-wind' I then should be called,

And gladly they'd welcome me all round the world."

J. E. C. F.



THE GOLDEN PATHWAY.

WOODBINE Cottage is situated in a pretty little country village in the south of England. It is called Woodbine, because woodbine or honeysuckle grows all over the front of the cottage. From the windows there is a beautiful view of the Channel, and it was

always a great treat for little Mary Fairbairn to look out of the window, and watch the ships sailing, some east and some west in the open sea.

Mary was a sweet-tempered little girl, full of fun and frolic, and her merry laugh was always thought by her mother to be the sweetest music she ever listened to. Mary, I am afraid, was rather spoilt by her mother, but perhaps there might be some excuse as she was the only child, and her father was far away in India, whither he had gone for three years.

It was a bright morning in June, the tide had been low, and the sands were smooth and even. Mary had taken her spade, and had been building houses on the sand, which were now all washed away by

the returning waves. It was the custom every morning, after Mary had been out for an hour or two, for her to come in about twelve o'clock and have a quiet sleep before dinner. As she was such a pet, and there was no other child to take care of, it very often happened that Mrs. Fairbairn would come and sit with her little girl until she went to sleep. Then when the little one closed her eyes, her mother would steal softly out of the door and leave Mary to her slumbers. Sometimes, but not very often, the kind mother would tell her little one a story, and then Mary would fall asleep to dream of what her mother had been saying.

On the day about which I am writing, the mother had been telling Mary some stories of the ships, and in the middle of a story the little girl fell fast asleep.

Sometimes when the sun is low in the sky and is setting over the sea, I dare say many of my readers have seen a beautiful streak of golden light reaching from the shore to the place where the sun is setting. The rest of the sea remains of a dark colour, whilst this beautiful golden path runs in a straight line for miles and miles, as far as the eye can reach.

Well, such a bright, golden path as this little Mary saw in her dream. Just into the midst of the path a beautiful boat was launched, with sails as white as snow. It was the prettiest little boat



Mary and her Mother.

Mary had ever seen, and she longed to be sailing along in it.

Presently she felt moving through the air, and found herself, as she thought, seated in the little vessel which she had been watching. She found herself quite alone, but was not frightened; a gentle breeze came behind and filled the sails, and she was journeying on fast to the bright light beyond.

Very soon, however, she began to feel rather cold, and thought the path seemed not to be quite so bright; the waves were rough, and she was tossed about. Then she began to wish that she was back again on the shore and with her mother. Of course poor little Mary knew nothing about managing the sails or steering her bark; so feeling frightened and lonely, she began to cry. But yet the little boat was tossed about by the waves, the wind was cold, and the light grew dim; she was drifting out of the little, narrow, golden path, and could not tell how to get into it again.

She began to think very much of her mother, and how lonely it was to be without her, and then the thought came of the time when her mother once was very ill in bed, and could not nurse her or play with her. She had felt lonely at that time.

But what did she do then? Her mother turned her weary head around on the pillow, and said, 'Kneel down, darling, and say, O God, make dear mother well, for Jesus Christ's sake.'

She remembered that she knelt down and said those words, and then after that said the Lord's Prayer. The next morning her dear mother was quite well again, and Mary was very happy. She knelt down by her mother's side, and said, 'I thank Thee, O God, for making dear mother well, for Jesus Christ's sake.' And then she said, 'Our Father,' again.

She remembered that her mother said, 'Whenever my little Mary is in trouble, she must kneel down and say, "Our Father," and then the kind Saviour who used to take little children on His knees and bless them, will send His angel and comfort His little one.'

All this Mary remembered in the boat. So she knelt down at the bottom of the

little vessel, and said the Lord's prayer, until she came to the words, 'Deliver us from evil.' After she had said that, she found the little vessel had drifted back again into the narrow golden path; the same warm wind filled the sails, and she went on and on until she came to a lovely city all shining like the brightest gold; and just as she was going into the gate that led to the city she awoke.

Her mother had returned to the room, and, seeing her little girl wake up with a start, she asked her what was the matter. Then Mary told her mother in her own simple words her strange dream, and asked her what it meant.

'I think you will hardly understand now, my darling,' said her mother; 'but perhaps by-and-bye you may know the meaning. That bright streak of golden light was meant to teach you that the way to heaven is a golden road; the straight line shows you it is a straight road, the short time it took you to get out of it shows it is a narrow road. The open sea into which you drifted shows that outside of the narrow road all is cold, and dark, and stormy. And the way by which you found it again, shows that God alone can keep us safe from all the coldness and the storms that are round about us. And prayer to Him, and trust in His love, are the best means of keeping us in the narrow path, and of leading us to the bright and happy home in heaven. W. M.

MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

HANNAH.



IN the days when the Judges ruled over Israel, 1170 years before Christ was born, Elkanah lived at Mount Ephraim; and this man went up out of his city yearly, to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of Hosts in Shiloh.

Elkanah had a wife, named Hannah, who grieved greatly because she had no child. Like other Jewish

mothers, she longed to have a son, hoping that he might be the promised Messiah.

One year, when Elkanah and his family went up to Shiloh, Hannah was so burdened with her sorrow, that she determined to go and make a special vow and prayer to God. So, when the sacrifice was ended and the feast was begun, she could not eat anything, but she went to the temple; and perhaps she was so taken up with her own grief, that she did not notice that *Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord.* And then, thinking only of God, in whose House she was, Hannah *prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore, and vowed a vow that if God would give her a son she would bring him up to God's service, and give him unto God all the days of his life.*

Now Hannah she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. And when Eli the priest marked her mouth, he thought she was drunken, and he spoke sternly and unkindly to her.

But Hannah answered, *No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.*

Then Eli blessed her, and asked God to hear her prayer. And Hannah believed that God would do so, and she went back to her husband and *did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.*

And Hannah's prayer was heard, and God gave her a son, and *she called his name Samuel* (that is, Asked of God), *saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord.*

And Hannah in her joy did not forget the vow that she had made in her sorrow; and she said to her husband that she would not go up to Shiloh till the child was old enough to be left without its mother; adding, *then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and abide there for ever.*

So, when the child was old enough to go away from her, she took him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh, and gave him to Eli, saying, *I am the woman that stood by thee here praying unto the Lord. For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition that I asked of him; therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as*

long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord.

Then they offered a sacrifice to God, and Elkanah and Hannah rejoiced, and Eli rejoiced with them; and Hannah sang a beautiful song of praise (1 Sam. ii.), which the Blessed Virgin Mary most likely had often sung; and so, when she poured forth her soul in wondering gratitude to God at being the Mother of the Lord in the hymn (Luke, i. 46) called the *Magnificat*, which is so often sung in church, she seems to echo the song of Hannah, the mother of little Samuel.

And so Hannah, loving mother as she was, went home with her husband, and left her little one in God's House at Shiloh; and the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest, girded with a linen ephod.

But though Hannah left her son in Shiloh and went to her own home in Mount Ephraim, yet she did not forget him, but *his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.*

And Samuel was worthy of his mother's love and care. He was obedient and gentle, and affectionate to the aged priest Eli; and God honoured him when he was yet a child by sending to him a vision, in which he warned Eli of the woes which were coming on his family because of his wicked sons.

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground; and all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was to be a prophet of the Lord.

Thus was Hannah rewarded for the *loan* which she had lent unto the Lord by seeing her son grow up in favour with God and man, holding an honoured place in the most honourable of earthly callings, the ministry and service of God.

Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.—Prov. iv. 10.



Hannah presenting Samuel to Eli.



THE TIRED SOLDIER.

WITH cocked hat all of paper,
And broad-sword all of wood,
Charlie marched to battle
As he thought a soldier should.

He had drawn the damask curtains,
He had darkened all the room,
For the cannon smoke, as he said,
Would make just such a gloom!

Long he fought the sofa-cushion,
 And at last cut off its head,
 Sitting fiercely down upon it
 To make sure that it was dead.
 Then, as no more enemies
 Seemed inclined to come,
 He strutted back to 'quarters'
 To the rattle of his drum.
 There the tired little soldier
 First stood, then sat 'at ease,'
 With one hand on his curly head,
 And the other on his knees;
 And soon he slept the happy sleep
 That only children can,
 And dreamt the dreams of what he'd do
 When he should be a man.

Oh! when in the great life-struggle
 Charlie has his foes to meet,
 May his battles be as easy,
 May his sleep be half as sweet.

J. E. C.

MIND THE DOOR.

DID you ever observe how strong a street-door is? how thick the wood is? how heavy the chain is? what large bolts it has? and what a lock? If there were nothing of value in the house, or no thieves outside, this would not be needed; but, as there are precious things within, and bad men outside, there is need that the door be strong, and we must mind the door. We have a house. Our heart and mind is that house. Bad things are always trying to come in and go out of our mind and heart. I will describe some of these bad things to you.

Who is that at the door? Ah, I know him; it is Anger. What a frown there is on his face! How fierce he looks! I will hold the door, and not let him in, or he will do me harm, and perhaps some one else.

Who is that? It is Pride. How haughty he seems! He looks down on everything, as if it were too mean for his notice. Ah, wicked Pride, I will hold the door fast, and try to keep him out.

Here is some one else. I am sure, from his sour look, his name is Ill-Temper. It will never do to let him in; for, if he can only sit down in the house, he makes every one unhappy, and it will be hard to

get him out again. No, sir, we shall not let you in, so you may go away.

Who is this? It must be Vanity, with his flaunting strut and gay clothes. He is never so well pleased as when he has a fine dress to wear, and is admired. You will not come in, my fine fellow; we have too much to do to attend to such folks as you.

Here comes a stranger. By his sleepy look and slow pace, I think I know him. It is Sloth. He would like nothing better than to live in my house, sleep or yawn the hours away, and bring me to rags and ruin. No, no, you idle drone, work is pleasure, and I have much to do. Go away, you shall not come in.

But who is this? What a sweet smile, what a kind face! She looks like an angel. It is Love. How happy she will make us if we ask her in! Come in; we must open the door for you.

Others are coming. Good and bad are crowding up. Oh, if men kept the door of their heart, bad thoughts and bad words would not come in and go out as they do. Let us welcome all things good, but war with all things bad. We must mark well who comes in; we must be watchful. Keep the guard! Mind the door! 'Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.'

And would you know how to keep it? Let Jesus in, and He will give you daily and hourly of His Spirit. 'Behold,' He says, 'I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'

HONEY-GATHERERS.

THE month of May has now come, and the insect world, that has been so long asleep, wakes up to life and activity. Grubs become butterflies, ants' nests pour forth their tribes, and the bees begin to swarm and rally round their queen. There is an old saying, 'A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay,' which means, that the sooner bees swarm, the sooner and the better will be their honey.

It is a pleasant sight to stand before a hive and watch the bees. They are of

three kinds: first, the queen-bee, who, having killed all her rivals, reigns over the hive; next, the males or drones, who live idle lives; and, lastly, the workers, the bees who gather the honey from the hearts of the flowers, and build up the waxen six-sided cells to hold it. These fly briskly from the hive when they start in search of sweets; but when they return, as their thighs are laden with their spoils, they walk slowly in.

In some parts there are wild bees, bees who make their hives in boughs of trees or in holes on the ground. There were such bees in Israel in the days of King Saul, when Jonathan, the son of Saul, 'put forth the end of his rod and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth.' (1 Sam. xiv.) We are told also that John the Baptist fed 'upon locusts and wild honey;' and in many parts of the Bible the land of Israel is called 'the land flowing with milk and honey.'

There are wild bees and wild honey, too, in India. But the bees there sometimes make their honey in places not so easy to reach as the branches of trees. In the picture we see a man descending the side of a very lofty cliff by means of a rope. He is going to gather the honey which the wild bees have stored in the face of the rocks. The rope by which he descends is made of, the root of a tree, called *rattan*, twisted together in links, like a chain, into which the man puts his toes. He is sure to be stung all over by the bees before he comes up again, so the task of gathering honey is painful as well as dangerous.

In the Shetland Isles, to the north of Scotland, the people descend the face of the cliffs in a similar manner in search of birds' eggs. It is a dangerous trade for the Shetlanders, as the cliffs are very high, and the rope liable to be cut through as it rubs against the sharp stones of the cliff.

W.

THE LEOPARD'S VISIT.

THERE is not a better-looking beast in all the Zoological Gardens than the leopard. His skin is sleek and shiny, his spots are brilliant. As he lies in his cage, or marches backwards and forwards, whisk-

ing his tail at the same time, he shows himself off to perfection.

Sleek, however, as the leopard is when he receives a visit in his lodgings in the Regent's Park, he is very different when he pays a visit at home, in Asia or Africa. Then he is alive to the very tips of his hairs. If a lamb or a kid be within his view, the place is besieged every night, until the prey is taken or the leopard himself gets killed by those who watch for him.

As soon as it gets dark, the wild beasts which lie all day in the jungles, wake up and fill the air with their noises. 'All the beasts of the forests do move and seek their meat from God.' (Ps. civ. 20.) Some find food close at hand, others search for it abroad, attacking it honestly, but the leopard is a *thief*. He is able somehow to discover, as soon as a traveller pitches his tent, whether there is anything good to eat there—any fowls, or a kid, or a lamb, and so on. He looks out first cautiously to see if the field is clear, and then he approaches, with more than the cunning of a fox, to the place where he knows his prey to be.

Our picture represents a leopard attacking a tent. Around it are many natives, who, except one man, seem quite afraid of their visitor, for they are all running away. The poor kid will certainly be devoured.

A short time ago, there was a leopard which committed great havoc every night in a Kaffir village. He was at length caught, and put into a cage to be sent to Cape Town. While he was confined, a Kaffir, who had suffered losses by the animal, came to see him, and was heard to address the leopard thus, 'Ah, old enemy, you are there? Oh, you beast, you bad beast, you horrid leopard! You ate my chickens and killed my goat. As you ate my chickens, so could I eat you; as you slew my goat, I should like to slay you—thus!' At this the man drew a knife and rushed forward to wound the animal, but the leopard, enraged at the man and his gestures, rushed forward, too, and beat against the bars of his cage so violently, that the Kaffir, taken unawares, lost his courage, and fled, leaving his enemy untouched, and the bystanders laughing.

W.



Honey Gatherers.



The Leopard's Visit.

P. 75.

ERNEST OF FELSENBURG.

(Continued from page 59.)

CHAPTER XI.

SOON afterwards, the Count himself came—a tall, noble-looking man, with a handsome face and a pleasant manner. Upon hearing that Father Meurad was in the house he sent for him.

"I am heartily glad to see you, reverend father," said he. "After such a journey and in such weather, to be again under a roof and in a warm room is a great comfort; but the sight of your face is a still greater pleasure, and I must open my heart to you. All my people are, as you see, in high spirits at the prospect of seeing their homes again, after their toils. But I, their leader, as is often the case in this world, have the only sad heart among them. I fear that some misfortune has happened at home. My wife is indeed well, but I am very anxious about my only son; for a long time my wife has scarcely mentioned him, and in her last letter she tells me that I may, perhaps, never see him again. You are acquainted with many people in this part of the country, father, for you have been a brave warrior

in your time: do you know any thing which has happened at Felsenburg? If you cannot give me information, at least you can offer me some counsel or consolation."

Father Meurad answered with a cheerful air, "I can, indeed, give you the most welcome news. Your son is alive and well; and is the dearest child I ever saw in my life."

"You know him?" said the Count, surprised.

"Oh, very well," said Meurad. "The time you have been away has been very eventful to him." He then related to the astonished Count all that he knew of the child, and to confirm his story, showed him the picture of the Countess.

"Yes, it is she!" said the Count, "to the very life; but I fear she will not look so blooming now. she must have suffered very much. But where is the boy?"

"Here, in this house," said Meurad.

"In this house!" exclaimed the Count. "Oh, why did you not tell me that before, father? Take me to him at once."

Meurad took the taper from the table, and the Count followed him to the room of his son. The child was sleeping the peaceful sleep of innocence, and the Count

bent over him with tears in his eyes "Ernest, dear Ernest!" he cried, taking the boy's hand and gently kissing him. "Wake up, your father is here." The little Ernest rubbed his eyes and looked at his father, at first only half awake.

"Are you really my father?" he said at last. "Oh, I am so glad. Is my mother with you?"

The Count took the child in his arms, shedding tears of joy. "God has wonderfully preserved you, my child," said he. "I can never be thankful enough to Him for having restored you to me."

"Nor can I," said Ernest. "Oh, how happy He has made us!"

The Count was delighted with the child. "Oh, Father Meurad," he said, after listening with pleasure to Ernest's lively questions and answers, "what do I not owe you! All my estates would be too little to reward you for the care you have bestowed upon my child."

In the meantime Margaret had entered the room, and stood timidly at a distance; when the Count saw her, he gave her his hand in token of forgiveness, and spoke kindly to her. "But the robbers," he said sternly, "shall pay heavily for their misdeeds." He at once gave orders to his soldiers to seek them out in their hiding-place, and bring them to Felsenburg. Then he turned again to talk to his son, and would gladly have remained there all night, if Meurad had not reminded him that they all needed sleep, that they might be ready for their journey to Felsenburg in the morning.

CHAPTER XII.

In the meantime, the Countess was leading a lonely, sorrowful life at Felsenburg. She had heard the proclamation of peace, and hoped soon to see her husband again; but, mingled with this hope, was the dreadful thought that he must now hear of the loss of his child. In her anxiety, she could find peace and rest nowhere; she wandered about from room to room, now in the chapel, now in the garden, finding no comfort but in fervent prayer, and in the thought that all events are overruled by an all-merciful God.

One day she wandered to the garden, and entering an arbour, spent some time there in weeping, and praying for strength to bear her great trial. Suddenly she heard a footstep, and looking up, saw Margaret, who had just arrived with the Count's party. A ray of hope dawned upon the heart of the Countess as she recognised Margaret, and saw the girl's cheerful face; the sight was as welcome as an angel from heaven. "Oh, gracious lady," said Margaret, "I bring you good news of your dear Ernest. He lives, and you will soon see him again." She had scarcely begun to speak when Father Meurad entered the arbour, to prepare the Countess for the arrival of her husband and child. The prudent man gave her to understand that she might expect to see them in an hour or two; and full of joyful hope, the Countess led Meurad to the room in which the child had formerly slept.

As she opened the door of the room, what was her astonishment at seeing her husband, with the child in his arms, hasten to meet her! With a cry of delight, she sank into the arms of the Count, embracing her husband and child. "Now I could gladly die," she said at length, "since I have lived to see this day. Oh! how wonderfully has God overruled all events. I dreaded to meet you, my dear husband, without our child; and now, at the first moment of our meeting, you place him in my arms. Never again will I distrust God's mercy and goodness!" The happy parents shed tears of joy and gratitude. Margaret wept with them, and even Father Meurad could not restrain his tears.

After they had somewhat recovered their calmness, Ernest began to tell his story to his mother, who listened to him with mingled smiles and tears; he pictured the moment when, through a cleft in the rock, he first caught sight of the outer world. But with still greater emotion he described the never-to-be-forgotten moment when Father Meurad first spoke to him of God.

"Really," said the Count, "I could almost wish to have passed my childhood in such a cavern! We are too much accus-

tomed to the sight of the works of God ; if we could see them for the first time as Ernest did, when we have reached an intelligent age, what a different impression they would produce upon us ! How we should rejoice in the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, and see in the greatness of His works a pledge of His love and goodness towards us, His creatures ! ”

“ Yes,” replied the Countess ; “ and perhaps the first sight of heaven may produce in us the same feelings as the sight of the beautiful earth did in Ernest, upon his escape from his underground abode. For it seems to me that, as Ernest’s playthings, the flowers, the lambs, and the trees, which pleased him so much in the cave, were only imperfect copies of the works of nature, so all our delights in this world may be only a shadow of the joys of heaven. But certainly the happiness of seeing again, even on earth, our loved ones after a long and sad separation, must be a real foretaste of the bliss of meeting in heaven those whom we have loved and lost ; for I feel at this moment as if heaven itself could have no greater joy.”

The venerable Father Meurad added, “ I quite agree with all you say, but the special lesson which Ernest’s story teaches us seems to be that the wisdom, goodness, and mercy of God, are so evident throughout creation, that even a child can see them, and recognise the Creator in His works.”

CHAPTER XIII.

After a few days the Count’s soldiers returned, bringing with them the robbers, whose retreat they had found out. They brought, too, a waggon loaded with chests full of stolen valuables. The robbers had not sought after the lost child ; for, finding the iron door locked, and not being acquainted with the opening in the rock through which he had escaped, they concluded that he must either have fallen down one of the deep pits about the cave, or have been buried alive by the falling in of one of the passages.

They were, therefore, much astonished when they arrived at Felsenburg, to see the young Count standing by his father’s

side. “ We thought,” said the captain, “ that no man living could equal us in cunning ; and now we are overreached by a mere child ! ”

The musician with the dulcimer, who was among them when they were taken, said to himself, “ We stole this child that he might secure our safety, and now he is the cause of our ruin.”

William, the young man who had always been kind to the boy, said, “ This is the hand of God, who has saved the child from us ; and I rejoice that he is alive, although I must lose my own life. I now see the truth of what my father and mother used so often to tell me : ‘ If the wicked could hide himself in the depth of the earth, yet God’s justice could find him, and bring him to the punishment he deserves.’ ”

When Ernest saw William among the robbers he was grieved, and begged his father to spare this man, who had shown him so much kindness. The Count said he could promise nothing ; but that he would deal with him as mercifully as he could. As it appeared upon examination that the young man had never shed blood, and was more a servant to the robbers than a robber himself, he was condemned to be imprisoned until he should show that he might safely be allowed to return to his friends. “ See,” said the Count to him, “ as no wrong is left unpunished, so no good deed is left unrewarded. You owe the lightness of your punishment to your kindness to my child. I will pay back to your mother all that I owe you for my son ; and I hope you will so conduct yourself, that I may soon be able to restore you to her.”

The rest of the robbers received the just punishment of their crimes ; and the old gipsy-woman was imprisoned for life. The stolen goods were restored to their owners wherever they could be found, and the remainder of the property was used to found an orphan-house, which the Count and Countess watched over and directed.

Margaret remained in the service of the Countess as before. The young shepherd from the mountains returned to his parents loaded with useful presents.



The Count would willingly have kept Father Meurad with him at Felsenburg, but he could not induce him to change his hermitage for the castle. When the hour of parting arrived, the old man blessed the Count, the Countess, and the little Ernest, who clung to him and could hardly be

persuaded to let him go. The noble family accompanied him to the castle gate; and before entering the carriage which was to bear him away, he turned once more to them, and said, "Farewell, and the peace of God be with you. We shall meet again in heaven." Y. Z.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. VI.]

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The Goslings.

THE GOSLINGS.

IT was a very happy day, and I was then a very young child, when for the first time in my life I had a little gosling put in my hands, and I had the pleasure of putting his downy back to my cheek. How I delighted in its bright yellow colour; and how glad I was that the people who were with me took entire charge of the hissing parents, of whom I stood in the greatest awe. I have seen many goslings since then, and they always bring back the recollection of that pleasant, long drive amongst the woody hills, and the pond in the tanyard where they lived.

I was once told a very funny yet sad story about goslings by a friend of mine who is a doctor. He was driving to see a patient near Godstone in Surrey; passing a pond and a meadow, he saw a boy rushing after some very young goslings, and trying to kill them by throwing stones at them, two or three being already dead on the ground. My friend took hold of the boy, and, giving him a good shake, said, 'You young rascal, what are you doing that for?' Upon which the boy answered, blubbering, 'Why did goslings' fayther bite I?' My friend could not help laughing, and let the boy go with a caution. Turning back to his gig, he saw the goose family with long outstretched necks taking their remaining young ones to a place of safety.

THE RED DEER.

YOU have heard about the harvest-mouse, the smallest four-footed animal in our own dear country, Great Britain. Now let me fix upon your mind which is the tallest. It is the handsome red deer, so called because his fur is of a beautiful reddish-brown. Many hundred years ago, when all the land was covered with thick woods, the red deer was to be found in almost all parts of the country; but as the villages and towns increased in number, and the people living in them also, the red deer was hunted down for his flesh and his skin, till there were but few left. The Kings of England were fond of chasing the deer, and in order that there

might still be a place in the south of England for them to roam about in, William the Conqueror destroyed thirty towns and villages to make a forest where they could live undisturbed, except when he went hunting. This place is still called the New Forest in Hampshire, and I dare say you remember reading in your English history that William Rufus, the son of the Conqueror, was accidentally killed there by Sir William Tyrrell, whose arrow, aimed at a deer, glanced from a tree and struck the king. In Scotland they are still to be found in large numbers, ranging over the heathery mountains, or hiding away in the deep glens and ravines. They are such handsome, graceful creatures, that gentlemen like to keep them about their parks, where they become very tame, and will come and eat biscuit out of your hand; but these are fallow-deer, not red deer. Many deer are to be seen under the chestnut trees in Greenwich Park, and when I was a little girl, one of my greatest treats was to be allowed to feed them with cakes and bread. The pretty things looked so shyly at me while putting out their soft lips for the food, and at the slightest alarm would bound far away under the green trees, and then it would be a long time before I could coax them to come near again.

The male deer is called a stag, and is known by his horns, which make him look very proud and stately, when he carries them about in the summer time, but in the winter months the least blow loosens his fine horns; they fall off quite easily, and then you can hardly distinguish him from his wife, the gentle doe. It is with his horns that the stag fights, and when they have fallen off he seems to know that he is helpless, so he hides away in sheltered spots where no one is likely to find him. By-and-bye, about the end of March, two little knobs are seen on his forehead, which grow larger and larger. They are covered with a soft skin like velvet, which is very hot to the touch; for these little knobs are the points of the horns, and they grow so very fast that they require a great deal of blood to nourish them, and the blood flows very fast through the little veins that

run along this velvety skin. By the middle of June, the horns are full grown, and they weigh nearly twenty-five pounds. The stag's neck must be very strong to carry such a weight about so easily. How do you think you can tell the stag's age? By the number of tines or little branches on the horn. For instance, if the stag be three years old, he will have three tines on each horn; and if five years old, five; so that the older a stag is the nobler he looks. It is said that he would live to be fifty or sixty if he could roam without being disturbed, but in Great Britain he seldom lives more than ten or twelve years. The stag is very quarrelsome when he has his horns, and I would advise you not to go near them in the month of August, for then they are particularly fierce. If two stags meet they will often fight till one is killed, and sometimes their antlers become so entangled that they both die; but when the winter comes, and the least knock will shake the horns off, he becomes very meek and timorous.

It shows how likely we are to misuse our strength unless we strive to be guided by what our Blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus, tells us. He says, 'Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you.' If we obeyed His commands we should never be cross or unkind to any one, however weak they might be, because we should not like any one to be cross or unkind to us. The stag is only an animal, and when he is quarrelsome knows no better; but children, both boys and girls, have reasoning souls, and ought not to fight and quarrel with one another.

The harvest-mouse is scarcely an inch high, while the stag, if measured from the ground to the tip of his horns, is over seven feet—taller than the tallest man. The female is called a hind, or doe, and the little one a fawn. One day a gentleman saw a fawn, scarcely an hour old, standing by its mother's side. She was licking and caressing it, but the moment she saw a man coming near she gave it a tap with her fore-leg, and the little creature instantly lay down and crouched to the earth, as if it knew that its mother wished it to hide itself: was it not an obedient little deer?

In the summer the deer are very fond of the sprays of ash trees, and in the winter of small boughs of holly. They are very changeable in their food, sometimes liking broom and heath, and at other times browsing on the young shoots of bushes and trees. They are very fond of music, and will follow a man playing almost any kind of instrument. A herd of forty deer was once led by the sound of a bagpipe and violin from a place in Yorkshire to Hampton Court; it would have been a difficult matter to have driven them, for their legs are so strong and light that they can bound away very quickly, and take very long leaps. There is a spot in the New Forest called Deer-leap, where a deer that was being chased made a great spring to get out of reach of his pursuers; posts have been fixed to mark the distance over which he jumped: it was fifty-four feet.

People have sometimes tried to tame deer sufficiently to make them useful, but without much success. A nobleman trained four stags to draw his carriage; they went pretty well, till one day they happened to go on a road where some hounds were hunting a fox. The hounds missed the fox but caught scent of the deer, and the poor frightened creatures rushed away as fast as ever they could, with the dogs after them. It seemed as if Lord Orford, who was driving them, must have been thrown from his seat; but fortunately the stags turned off the road into a stableyard, into which they were in the habit of going, and there they were all locked up, while the dogs were baying outside. I do not think that Lord Orford ever tried to drive stags again.

In the British Museum you may see numbers of deer of different kinds from all parts of the world. The rein-deer which lives in Lapland, is one of those I like best, because he is so useful to the Laplanders. He draws their sledges, supplies them with meat, and milk, and cheese, and his skin provides them with warm clothes and bedding, and he finds his own food by scraping among the snow with his hoofs, and grazing on the moss that grows underneath. We have cows, and sheep, and horses, because our country is warmer;



The Red Deer.

the rein-deer cannot live except in cold countries, where our cows and sheep would die as they would do, if they were sent to Lapland. So you see our Heavenly Father,

who provides for the wants of all His creatures, has adapted each to the part of the world in which it has to live.

ISABEL THORNE.



FREDDY'S FIRST GOING TO SCHOOL.

FREDDY was a spoilt little boy, and his mother did not send him to the Infant School as soon as most of her neighbours sent their children. Whenever she spoke of it, Freddy said he didn't want to go, and looked so cross that she put it off till he was nearly six years old. Then she

found that he was getting so far behind the neighbours' children, that she determined to send him; and, as she guessed that Freddy would make a great crying if she took him herself, she thought she would get a little girl who lived in the same street to call for him; and in the

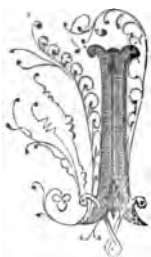
picture you see that it was not a very pleasant office that Mary May had to do. Freddy howled and cried the whole way, and had to be pulled along almost by force.

When Freddy got to the school-room, in which there were about a hundred little children, he howled and cried for his mother more loudly than ever. The governess was very kind to him, and tried in all ways to soothe him, but the spoilt little boy made such a crying that he disturbed the whole school. She knew that if he were left to himself he would get tired of that, and so he did, for by-and-bye his cries dropped into sobs and, when he found that the work of the school went on and that no one took any notice of him, he began to wish that he was marching about, and singing, and 'exercising' like the others; and when twelve o'clock came, and Mary May came to take him home, he felt that school was not such a dreadful place. And if you had seen him a few days afterwards in his place in the 'gallery,' you would hardly have thought he was the same boy.

Like a great many older people, Freddy found that what look like troubles at a distance, may be no troubles at all—maybe, really pleasures, when near at hand.

MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

RIZPAH.



IN the days of King David there was a terrible famine in the land of Judah. No rain fell, and so the harvest failed, and there was scarcely any food to keep the people alive. When this had gone on for three years, year after year, David feared that

God must be angry, and was punishing the people for some great sin. So David inquired of the Lord; and the Lord answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites* (2 Sam. xxi. 1).

You remember the story of these Gibeonites. When Joshua and the children of Israel had crossed over Jordan out of the wilderness, about four hundred

years before the reign of David, and when they had taken Jericho and Ai, and were marching on and would soon have come to the cities of Gibeon, the Gibeonites, who knew they could not resist the Israelites by force, tried to escape by guile. They sent some of their chief men to Joshua, pretending that they had come from a great distance. These men took *old sacks on their asses, and wine-bottles* (or wine-skins), *old and rent and bound up, and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.* And when they met Joshua, they said that they had come from a far-off land, where they had heard of all the wonders that God had done for Israel in Egypt; and that they wished to make an alliance with so great and brave a people.

Joshua and the men of Israel were rash and careless, and did not ask *counsel at the mouth of God*; but they judged for themselves, and bound themselves by an oath to let them live.

Three days after this, they found that these men were their neighbours, and were a tribe of those Canaanites whom God had commanded them to destroy.

When the men of Israel came to the cities of the Gibeonites, though they were very angry, yet *they smote them not*; for the princes of Israel said, *We have sworn unto them by the Lord God, now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swear unto them* (Josh. ix. 20). So the Gibeonites were made hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation, and for about four hundred years the Gibeonites lived safely among the people until the time of Saul, the first King of Israel.

Very likely the Gibeonites, being of a different race, were despised and disliked; and Saul, to make himself popular with his own people, ill-treated and killed many of the Gibeonites. In spite of the solemn oath by which the nation had bound itself in the days of Joshua, Saul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah.

This was a national sin, and God de-

clared to David that it was as a punishment on the nation for this sin against the Gibeonites that the famine had come, which had already lasted three years.

When David knew why the famine was sent, he determined at once to put away the sin which so displeased God. Wherefore he said to the Gibeonites, *What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?*

Then the Gibeonites answered, *We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; but let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul.*

And the King said, I will give them.

And the King took the two sons of Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, and the five sons of Michal, the daughter of Saul, and he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord; and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the beginning of barley harvest.

Perhaps this seems to us unfair and too severe; but it was done by God's command, and therefore it must have been right, though we cannot understand it; for *shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* (Gen. xviii. 25).

We may be sure that the sin committed must have been very grievous, or God would not have punished it by three years' famine. It was necessary also to give a public proof of His hatred of Saul's wickedness in breaking the oath, and of his cruelty to the Gibeonites, that others might take warning; and so David was commanded thus to visit the sin of the father upon the children, for Saul himself had been some time dead. It would no doubt pain David to put these men to death; but the Spirit of the Lord had taught him (as he tells us in 2 Sam. xxiii. 3) that *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God*; and he knew that a ruler must be *the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doeth evil* (Rom. xiii. 4).

But when these seven men were hung up on seven gibbets on the hill of Gibeah, there was shown very plainly how great is

a mother's love; for Rizpah, the mother of two of the ill-fated men, *took sackcloth and spread it upon the rock, and stayed there and watched the dead bodies from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven*; that is, until the rain came, which showed that God would again make the land fruitful, and put an end to the famine.

How long Rizpah watched there we are not told; but most likely it was for many weeks that she abode beside the dead and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

For many weary days and many sleepless nights Rizpah watched beside the dead, so that they might not be touched by the ravens or vultures, or by the wolves and hyenas that abound in the land; but that their bodies might be buried when the time of their exposure was ended.

When King David heard of this unwearied love, he sought to do all that he could to soothe Rizpah's wounded spirit. He sent for the bones of Saul and of Jonathan, which had been left at Jabesh-Gilead since they were slain at Gilboa; and David's men *gathered the bones of them that were hanged, and then the remains of the nine together were buried in the sepulchre of Kish, Saul's father.*

From this story we may learn two simple lessons. First, that it is a solemn thing to promise, and that God is angry with those who wilfully break the promises they have made. God never forgets His promises, and He commands us to remember ours. And we may learn also a lesson of patient submission from the conduct of Rizpah. She did not use force or fraud to get for her sons a decent burial. She did not hide herself in her tent, and give herself over to grief and despair; but, like a brave and loving mother as she was, she set herself to do what she could to lessen the evil that had befallen her. Though her heart was well-nigh broken, she still hoped in God, and watchfully, meekly, humbly, she waited, day after day and night after night, till the rain of heaven fell, and gave a sign that the bodies of her beloved ones might be laid in the grave.



Rizpah.



The Empty Cradle.

THE EMPTY CRADLE.

THE sun shone brightly, one Midsummer's day, upon the grounds of Sudbury Hall. The flowers were gay, and outwardly all things looked joyous and lovely; but, when one looked at the house itself, and found all the blinds down all round the house, it seemed as if the sunshine could not enter there that day. It was, indeed, a sad day, and a day of mourning; the servants walked quietly, and shut the doors gently. Every one spoke as if in a whisper. Fido, the spaniel, no longer wagged his tail, but kept looking about the house. Sometimes he went into the dining-room, sometimes into the nursery, but returned to his little kennel with a dissatisfied look.

No, there was no sunshine in the house that day; little Margaret, the pet and darling of all the household had gone away. The angels had come for her, and had taken her to that place where all is bright and lovely, and only her empty little bed was left in the room.

Her little body only an hour or two ago had been borne away to be put into its resting place, but her bright and happy spirit was with the angels. Her poor mother full of grief sat by the empty cradle and wept for the lost darling; her father stood by her side holding in his hand a little lock of her fair curly hair, the only relic of their lost one.

On the morrow the scene was changed; the blinds were raised, and the house again looked cheerful. Nothing however, seemed to cheer the poor mother. All their riches were as nothing; the large house, the beautiful furniture, the lovely garden, and all that earthly riches could procure were within her reach, but they seemed to her without any value.

Yet why should she weep? little Margaret was now an angel: she felt no pain, she knew no sorrow. The cradle, indeed, was empty, but there was one more place occupied in God's house above.

Years passed away, other babies were sent by our Heavenly Father to comfort and cheer the sorrowing parents.

These lived to grow up, but none took

the place of the first. Yet the mother has now ceased to sorrow for little Margaret, and learnt to thank God for having taken her away. Before this first baby's death she had only thought of earth, but since that sad time she has trained all her little ones for heaven.

She often thought of two sweet little verses she had read in a book of poetry, and those verses greatly comforted her:—

The baby wept.
The mother took it from the nurse's arms,
And soothed its grief, and stilled its vain alarms,
And baby slept.
Again it weeps.
And God doth take it from the mother's arms,
From present pain and future unknown harms.
And baby sleeps. W. M.

'IT COMES FROM ABOVE'



HERE was once in France a poor boy who was called 'Little Peter.' He was an orphan, and begged his bread from door to door. He sang very prettily, and people seldom sent him away empty-handed. It was an idle and sad life which he led; but Peter had no one to care for him, and he did not know what else to do. He had the singular custom of saying on every occasion, 'It comes from above.' I will now tell you why.

When his father was on his death-bed—if, indeed, he had a bed, for he was very poor—he said to his son, 'My dear Peter, you will now be left alone, and you will have many troubles in the world, but always remember that all comes from above; then you will find it easy to bear everything with patience.'

Little Peter understood him; and, in order not to forget the words, he often spoke them aloud. He received every gift with the words, 'It comes from above.'

As he grew up, he used to consider what they meant. He was wise enough to see that, as God rules the world, we may well believe of everything that happens in the way of His providence, 'it comes from above.'

This faith of Little Peter often turned

out for his benefit. Once, as he was passing through the town, a sudden gust of wind blew off a roof-tile, which fell on his shoulder, and struck him to the ground. His first words were, 'It comes from above.' The bystanders laughed, and thought he must be out of his senses; for of course it could not fall from below; but they did not understand him. A minute after, the wind tore off an entire roof in the same street, which killed three men. Had Little Peter gone on, he would probably have been at that moment just where the roof fell.

Another time, a gentleman employed him to carry a letter to a town, bidding him make all haste. On his way, he tried to jump over a ditch; but it was so wide he fell in, and was nearly drowned. The letter was lost in the mud, and could not be recovered. The gentleman was angry when Little Peter told him of the loss, and drove him out of doors with his whip. 'It comes from above,' said Peter as he stood on the steps. Next day the gentleman sent for him. 'See,' said he; 'there are two half-crowns for you for tumbling into the ditch. Circumstances have now so changed that it would have been a great loss to me if the letter had gone safely.'

I could tell you much more about Peter. When he had become a great boy, he was still called 'Little Peter.' A gentleman who came into town, having heard his story, sent for him, in order to give him something. When Little Peter entered the room, the Englishman said, 'What think you, Peter? why have I sent for you?' 'It comes from above,' replied Peter.

This answer greatly pleased the gentleman. After a while, he said, 'You are right. I will take you into my service, and provide well for you. Will you agree to that?'

'It comes from above,' answered Peter. 'God is very good to me. I will gladly go with you.'

So the Englishman took him away. It was a good thing for the poor boy, who had been taught no trade. Long afterwards, when his master died, he left him a large sum of money to carry on the business; and 'Little Peter' became a wealthy man in Birmingham. But he still said of every occurrence, 'It comes from above.'

INDIAN WOMAN BEARING FUEL.

THE poor woman, whom we see in the picture, bowed down with her double burden, is one of the Pawnee tribe of Indians, who live between the United States and the Rocky Mountains, near the springs of the great Mississippi. Her complexion is fair, and her figure slim and graceful. She seems quite unfitted for her rough occupation.

It is the lot of the female in all heathen lands to be little better than a slave to the man. It is so all over Africa, Asia, and in many parts of America; and the position of the female is a happy one only where Christianity has taught the people better.

Let us look for a short time at what the Indian female has to do.

Her early life is one of hardships. Little cared for by her parents because she is not a boy, and often in want of food, she somehow struggles up to womanhood. She is then chosen by some young hunter to be his wife, her own wishes never being consulted in the matter. She is obliged to consent, and then her hard labour and weary life begins.

The Indian life is one of change. The Indians are always moving from place to place in search of food. The man's business is hunting and fishing—no more. He never carries the tent. This is left to the woman; she bears the skin or bark, and the poles of which the tent is composed on her back, sustained by a band of leather round her forehead. When her child is too young to walk, she bears this additional burden. When they stop, she has to pitch the tent, and go into the woods with a hatchet, and bring home fuel for dressing the food; and, when the meal is ready, it is only after her husband has done, that she can sit down to partake of it, and dry her wet moccasins by the fire.

Sometimes the man is out alone on a hunting excursion after deer or buffalo. He carries his gun, and the bow, and quiver full of bone-tipped arrows. When he brings his game down, he is obliged to carry it home himself, but at the tent



Indian Woman carrying Fuel.

door he throws it down and the woman does the rest. It is her work to take off the skin, divide the animal, dress it, and make clothes for all the family of the fur. If they stay long enough in one place to grow a patch of Indian corn, it is the woman who prepares the ground, sows the grain, and reaps it.

Then there is the care of the children. The girls are never noticed by the father at all, and all he does for a boy, is to teach him to become an expert hunter. In the canoe, the woman takes the paddle—the woman does all.

Besides these she has much to bear with. She must never cross the path of her husband; if she were to do so when he goes hunting, his journey would be put off and she would suffer accordingly. All the Indians are superstitious. A cup or a bowl that a woman uses is unclean to a man.

And when at last she comes to die, there is no kind one to watch her parting breath, or to tell her of rest in heaven. As soon as she is taken ill, the tent is deserted, and she is left to recover or die alone, unless, perhaps, a medicine man visits her to rattle his drum over her, and terrify her about the gloom of the land of spirits to which she is hastening.

W.

THE WONDERFUL LENS.

STANHOPE lenses, Stanhope lenses, one penny each, one penny each.

This cry fell on our ears the other day in the crowded streets of London. A man stood upon the curb-stone, one of his hands bearing a little tray filled with his wares, while the other hand held up one of his lenses. 'Only one penny each,' he cried. 'These wonderful lenses will make a flea look as big as a kitten.'



Now, as we knew that the proper Stanhope lens costs as much as half-a-crown when bought at a shop, curiosity led us to lay out a penny for one of these cheap ones.

On getting home, a short examination of the article revealed the mystery. The lens was merely a drop of clear gum, in a wire. The gum had hardened and looked like glass, and on putting the eye to it, it really magnified a good deal. Happily we could not get a flea to see if it came to the size of a kitten, but a threepenny piece under the lens, looked much larger than half-a-crown.

A lens, according to Sir Isaac Newton, is 'a glass, convex on both sides.' When polished and placed in the sun, it draws the rays to a point, and then the lens is called a burning glass. But our Stanhope

lens and the lens in the picture show that a lens need no longer be made of glass. Ours was of gum, and the other is of ice—cold ice.

Captain Scoresby, an Arctic voyager, often used the ice lens as a burning-glass. He himself tells us how he astonished his crew by firing gunpowder, and even lighting the sailor's pipes with such a lens, the ice remaining firm and solid all the time.

Thus fire may be got out of ice. Who knows whether some day, the 'Thames may not be set on fire at last?' W.

A THIEF ROBBING HIMSELF.

AS a rich gentleman was coming from Spain with his wife, in a *post-chaise*, at a steep ascent in the Pyrenees he got out to walk, letting the carriage go on. After a while a man suddenly came from a wood, and, presenting a pistol, threatened death if the traveller did not allow himself to be robbed. Seeing that resistance was useless, the gentleman permitted the man to take his purse, in which were about 80*l.*, his watch, breast-pin, and a diamond ring. The thief then turned to leave, but stepping back, he made the gentleman give up his great-coat, and threw to him in exchange his own ragged jacket. When the robber had gone on, the traveller took the ragged jacket, and, fearing to catch cold, put it on. On joining his wife in the *post-chaise*, after telling her what had occurred, he put his hands into the pockets of his strange garment, and, to his astonishment, he found not only his purse, ring, watch, and pin, but a gold snuff-box and another purse. The thief, in his anxiety to obtain the gentleman's coat, forgot in his hurry that he had put the things he had stolen into the pockets of his own jacket, and when he threw it to the gentleman, he left the contents in the pocket, and hastened away, not perceiving that he had robbed himself.



LITTLE HUMPY.

(Continued from p. 67.)



ND so Annie became almost a prisoner in her new home. Only on Sundays, and now and then on other days when her aunt had no work, did she ever go out. She grew paler and thinner than ever, and took to fretting, and was quite unlike the bright child she had been a month or two before. Mrs. Home was sorely puzzled as to what to do with her; but, true to her promise, said nothing more about school.

One day in the beginning of December, as Annie was standing idly at the window, watching a few sparrows hopping about on the stones outside, she saw a gentleman come into the court and knock at the door nearest to the entrance. She knew that he was one of the clergymen at the church to which she went with her aunt, and she knew that his name was Mr. Thomas. He had been away when she first came to London, but a Sunday or two ago he had read prayers, and then a neighbour who had walked home with them had remarked to Mrs. Home,—“So Mr. Thomas is come back! he don't look much better than he did afore he went away: but some folks always are thin and white, and it's not their own fault either.”

This was how Annie knew his name, and now she stood staring at the door into which he had gone, wondering whether he came and talked to people as their clergyman did at home. “Suppose he should come in here?” she thought, turning from the window, and giving a glance at the chairs and table, then running for a duster and giving them a hasty rub. “I think I'd hide if he did.” She ran once more to the window as she said this to herself, and had just climbed up on a chair again to look out when there came a knock at the door; and before she could scramble down from her post she heard

a cheerful voice saying,—“Are you in, Mrs. Home?”

There stood Mr. Thomas, half in the doorway. Annie could not hide herself now, so she made a little curtsy and said, “Aunt is not at home, sir; will you come in, please;” and she put a chair near the fire for her visitor.

“So you are Mrs. Home’s little niece, are you?” said the clergyman; “and you are paying her a visit, I suppose?”

“No, sir; I have come to live with her. I’ve been here a long time now.”

“And you go to school, I suppose?”

“No, sir; aunt said I need not.”

“Not go to school! But I thought I didn’t know your face. Don’t you want to learn, my little girl?”

“It isn’t that, sir. I went to school at my own home always, but they were kind to me there—they didn’t call me names.”

“And they will not call you names here, I hope.”

“But they do, they do—all of them;” and Annie began to cry.

“Poor children!” said Mr. Thomas, “they hardly know any better yet. I dare say now where you have lived, my child, there has always been a clergyman to teach you what is right!”

“Yes, sir,” said Annie, looking up through her tears.

“But here they have not been taught in that way—there has been no school here till the last two years, and the poor children were never taught anything before that time; so you must not wonder if they are rough and rude. But they are not all unkind, are they?”

“I don’t know, sir; I don’t go with them. Aunt said I need not when they called me names; they daren’t do it when I am with her.”

“Then you don’t go out at all except when your aunt is at home—you stay shut up here all day? I don’t know your name, my child?”

“Annie, sir; Annie Dalton.”

“Well, Annie, you went to school at home, you say; were you not taught there that even children ought to do as much good as they can in the world? We are not to shut ourselves up and speak to no

one because things vex us. Now if you were to speak pleasantly to these children, and try to do little kindnesses to them, helping them when you see they are in trouble, they would learn to love you, and then they would soon leave off calling you names. Then, again, I think you ought to go to school; it is not right to grow up ignorant when you have the chance of learning. You would like to do right, would you not?”

Annie did not answer. If going to school was doing right, she would certainly not like it; she stood twisting her fingers one over the other, and feeling almost ready to cry again.

“It would be hard, I know, Annie; doing right often is hard: but will you think about it, and see if you cannot make up your mind to come to school, and to bear with these poor children? Repay them good for evil, if you can. I must go now, but I shall come and see you again, and then you shall tell me what you make up your mind to do.”

He went away, and Annie stood where he had left her, still twisting her fingers; but after a time she knelt down, and pressing her face in her hands, prayed that God would help her to do right. She looked so happy when she got up again, that if you had seen her then you would not have thought that she had just made up her mind to do a very disagreeable thing.

“Aunt Anne,” she said, when Mrs. Home came in that evening, “may I begin to go to school on Monday?”

“To school, my child? to be sure you may! I’ll be only too glad. But what makes you want to go all of a sudden?”

“I don’t want to go,” said Annie; “but Mr. Thomas came here this afternoon, and he says I ought.”

“Mr. Thomas! bless him! he always is a-coming to see us poor folk; not that I’ve seen much of him myself, because I’m seldom in. And so he’s been talking to you, child, and wants you to go to school?”

“Yes; and I’ll begin Monday, please, aunt.”

“Well, my dear, I’m sure I am glad enough for you to go. I don’t like your sitting moping here, and that’s the truth.



But I think I'd best speak to the children before you do go; maybe they would listen to me:" but her voice was rather doubtful as she said this.

"No, thank you, aunt, it would do no good, I am sure; and perhaps they would hate me then for telling tales."

(To be continued.)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

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[One Penny



Vixen and Squattie, from Life by F. W. KEVL.

VIXEN AND SQUATTIE;

OR,

THE LITTLE POACHERS.



ONE day there was great excitement when the children came home from their walk. Looking for the cause of it, I saw one of those bandy-legged, long-backed beagles, which the French call *bassets* (low ones), the Germans badger-dogs, and the English turnspits; though they are a different dog from the old English turnspit who has entirely died out in England, but traces of which are still to be found in Hanover and the North of Germany, where they are used in the same way as the badger-dogs. From her squat form, I called the little foundling Squattie, and got very fond of her, as she showed great intelligence. For various reasons, I found it necessary to part with the little dog to a kind friend in the country; in fact, to *Samson's** master. Well, there she was among the big dogs, thinking herself one of them; and all went well, till she discovered that there were such things as rabbits, and, moreover, that *she* had a nose, which told her where the rabbits were. But, besides the rabbits, pheasants were preserved in those covers, and these did not feel easy on their perches at night when hearing the loud barking of Scoody-wops, as I called her too. So her master was warned by the keepers that she might get shot or trapped; and he, not liking either to annoy a neighbour, or that harm should befall Squattie, gave orders that she should be stopped from going hunting.

But that was sooner said than done, because Squattie, somehow or other, had made friends with a little, bold, sandy Skyeterrier, who was named Vixen, and taught her all the mysteries of woodcraft, and they set off with double zeal together.

They knew they were in the wrong,

because they were scolded first, and afterwards whipped, when they were found on the way to the woods. So at last they used to sneak off singly; but managed to meet. The servants, when I stayed at the house, used to say, 'The little dogs have been talking together, they are sure to go hunting.' True enough they did go. And one night all went to bed, and the little dogs had not come home. I heard a howl between eleven and twelve o'clock, and found Vixen at the door. But where was Squattie? Thomas was sent next day to inquire, and found her at the keeper's. She had been caught in one of the traps, where she passed the night, and had a terrible wound in her fore-leg, which much swelled.

But even this hard lesson did not cure her, and so now the dogs are tied up by turns for twenty-four hours, for they do not like to go alone on their poaching expeditions. But, you see, it is very disagreeable for them to be tied up outside, when they might both be free to run into the kitchen and sit by the warm fire, and listen to the talk of people and of the two poll-parrots, and have the company of 'Bess,' the Persian cat, and her kittens, and get nice little bits from Wilcox the cook, who is never put out by the animals, and manages to keep everything straight, and clean as clean can be. But then she says, 'Where there is a will there is a way.' And I say, 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' and bad companions often lead astray; for Vixen was tempted by Squattie to poach. Little dogs may be excused if they yield to temptation, although they may know what they ought to do, or not to do; but—ah, well, I see that you know what I mean, so I will not say any more.

JOHNNY PERKINS AND HIS PENNY.

LITTLE Johnny Perkins was an orphan, now about eight years old. His father had been dead more than a year; his mother nearly four years; and Johnny lived with his old grandmother, who was very poor, but very industrious, and, unlike

* A pony, whose picture was given in the *Prize* for 1864, page 48.

many poor people, she was a careful manager; never thinking she had a right to eat hot cake one day, and go without bread another. Her trade was shoe-binding. She used to bind shoes for a shoemaker in good business, who paid her threepence per pair for binding. This was generally paid on a Saturday, when granny always divided it out, counting so much a day for the next seven days, and so arranging her purchases of provision that every day should have its due share. Granny Perkins never went into debt. She used to say that "those who run in debt pay a heavy interest for the loan, for credit makes tradespeople usurers; and right enough too, since even if they have not many bad debts to make up for, they have the loss of interest on their money, which might in the meantime be turned over and over again with profit at each turn."

So it happened that Granny Perkins always had bread and vegetables, and a cup of tea to cheer her; and if one shop did not serve her well, she could go to another, ready money always commanding the best of every thing. Though she could not often command meat, she used in cold weather to buy a marrow-bone at the cost of sixpence, which she would boil one whole day, and let the liquor stand to get cold, when a cake of delicious marrow would be found on the top. This she would take off and use as butter for the rest of the week,—“far more wholesome and better tasting,” she would say, “than the salt butter of her neighbours.” And then the bone was daily boiled with vegetables or peas for about a fortnight, every day yielding a good nourishing bowl of soup for herself and grandson.

Now it so happened that one Saturday when granny took home her work, the shoemaker was so busy he could not attend to her, and she was told to come on Monday for more work, and then she should be paid.

Poor granny! it was cold weather, her bone had already lasted a fortnight, and she had hoped to have procured a fresh one. Her coals were done too, and she could not do without fire, so she must have a hundred-weight of coals and a pennyworth of wood

out of her reserve-fund. Then she wanted to buy her little grandson a new comforter to wear to the Sunday-school the next day. She had lately bought him a pair of new boots, so that her fund was rather low just now. But when her bread, and potatoes, and coals, and wood, were bought, she found she could just pay for the comforter, and she determined to do without the bone and the tea till Monday, for she said, “We can manage for one day. I will put all my tea into the pot, and if I take one cup to-day I can warm it up for another to-morrow, and I will boil the bone again all the evening; anything is better than going into debt.”

Little Johnny, besides attending the Sunday-school used to go to the National school in the week, for granny thought it right to give him every advantage while he was young, as he would soon have to work for his living. Saturday afternoon was his weekly half-holiday, and though when at home he was very useful to his grandmother, doing many little things to help her, he was as fond of a game of play as most little boys are. And after granny's marketing, when he had to help her home with the purchases, he was generally allowed an hour or more to play with some of his school-fellows.

On this particular afternoon, however, he did not seem much inclined to go out. He crept up to the fire and seemed thoughtful; and, to tell the truth, he sat ruminating, saying in his own mind, “Granny didn't buy the new bone to-day, nor cabbage, nor butter, nor dripping for the potatoes: shan't we have any this week?”

But granny observing him, said, “Johnny, my boy, don't *crowlge* over the fire, go out for a bit, and run about and warm yourself, that is more healthy for young blood than fire-heat. I shan't want you for an hour, so you can play for that time.”

“But mayn't I go for something to help you?” he asked. “You haven't bought all the marketing.”

“All that I can well buy to-day,” answered granny. “The rest must wait till Monday, because I haven't been paid this week yet. We have nice bread and good



Johnny and his Grandmother.

potatoes, and I can make the bone do one day more, I daresay; so never mind, run away till four o'clock, by that time I shall want you home. And see what I bought for you this morning; you may put it on if your hands are clean, and you will take care not to get it soiled." This she said, showing the warm comforter; and Johnny

ran at once to wash his hands, and trotted out as happy as a prince.

When he got out to the usual place of meeting his little companions, they were not there, and while he stood looking about and wondering where they were, a man came upon horseback, and jumping from his horse he asked Johnny to hold

the bridle for a minute. It is wonderful what little boys are sometimes trusted with such offices.

This time, however, the rider was really little more than a minute before he returned, jumped on his horse, and threw the boy a penny "to buy an orange."

"An orange: oh, how nice!" thought Johnny. And he looked towards a shop in whose window oranges, and apples, and gingerbread, were most temptingly displayed. He picked up the penny thinking, "Yes, I'll buy an orange!" But as he was crossing over the road, he asked himself, "Would granny like it? I must give her some. She has no tea for to-morrow. I wonder if I could buy a pennyworth of tea?" and he turned back again, resolving the tea would be best, "Because granny had given him the new comforter." When he thought of that he quickened his steps, and going into a grocer's shop asked for a pennyworth of tea.

"We don't sell pennyworths of tea," replied the grocer. "Who sent you here?"

"Nobody," said the little boy; "only granny has no tea for to-morrow, and this penny was given me, so I thought I'd buy her some. What can I have for a penny?"

Just then his eye settled on a box of Yarmouth bloaters, the shopman saw where he was looking, and said, "You can have one of those."

Johnny remembered that granny liked a red herring, so he paid his penny at once, and was leaving the shop with his prize, when a gentleman, who had happened to be passing at the time the penny was thrown to Johnny, and had heard him told to buy an orange, and was then in the shop making purchases, touched his shoulder and said to him, "Don't you like oranges?"

"Oh, yes!" said Johnny, "but granny gave me this," touching his scarlet comforter, "and she is always kind, and I wanted to give her something."

"Just wait a minute," said the gentleman, and returning to the shop, he soon came out with a quarter of a pound of tea and three oranges, and giving them to Johnny, he said, "There, God has sent some tea for your good granny, and some oranges for you; you will have the plea-

sure of eating the one and of giving the other, because you have shown yourself a dutiful and grateful child."

So saying, the gentleman entered the shop again, leaving Johnny bewildered with astonishment, in which state he stood for full two minutes without knowing what to do. He looked at the tea and the oranges put into his hand, to be sure it was quite true. Then, recollecting himself, he went into the shop to thank the kind gentleman, but he was nowhere to be found. He had, in fact, left the shop while Johnny was looking at his treasures. Satisfied that the stranger was not there, Johnny hastened home to display his gifts. And when he told how he came by them, the poor widow's heart blessed God for giving her so good a little grandson, and she prayed that her orphan boy might always be kept in the path of kindness and happiness, escaping "the evil that is in the world;" while he could not help feeling how much happier he was than he could have been if he had selfishly spent his penny in the purchase of an orange for his own eating. And his three oranges afforded him yet another pleasure. He asked his granny if he might take one to little Willy Chambers, who had been ill at home for three or four days, "Then there will be one left for you and one for me," he added. Granny gave him leave to go, and, moreover, told him she should not care for any, as she had the tea which she liked much better.

And the poor little sick boy showed so much pleasure in the enjoyment of the orange, that Johnny would fain have left all three with him, but Willy would not hear of that. Johnny, however, forced him to take two, saying, "You are ill, you know, and I am well; and, indeed, I would rather you should have them." So saying, he placed the second on the bed and ran away.

Happy Johnny! What a sweet sleep he had that night! Oh, if everybody would but try to give others pleasure, what a happy world it would be—for no one ever tried to make another happy without having the blessing returned with tenfold increase into his own bosom.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

THE SHUNAMMITE MOTHER.



WHEN the prophet Elisha lived in the land of Israel, as he journeyed from place to place to speak God's message or to do His work, he often came to a village called Shunem, and one of the chief women there asked him to eat bread in her

house as oft as he passed by. Elisha spoke of this good woman as a *Shunammite*, because she lived at Shunem.

After Elisha had visited her house many times, this woman said to her husband, *Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be that, when he cometh to us, he shall turn in thither.* (2 Kings, iv. 10.)

When Elisha first knew this Shunammite and her husband, they grieved because they had no child; but Elisha prayed God to give them a son, and God did so: and as he was their only one, they loved him dearly.

One day when the child was grown old enough to run about by himself, he went out to his father to the reapers, and when the reapers saw the boy, they would say, 'There is our master's little son;' and they would all have a kind word and smile for him.

In the lands of the East, the sun shines with much more heat than in Northern countries like England, and often people there die of what is called 'sun-stroke,' and so they take care to keep their heads covered, either with thick woollen caps, or with shawls or turbans of long rolls of linen; and perhaps the Shunammite's child, in his play, had let his cap fall off. When he felt the pain of the sun-stroke, the child said to his father, *My head, my head.* His father did not know how ill the child was, so he said to a lad, *Carry him*

to his mother. The lad took him in his arms, and brought him to his mother.

The quick ear of the mother would hear the cries of her child, as the lad who carried him came near to the house; she would run out to see what was the matter; she would take the child in her arms and carry him into the house, and she would sit down and nurse him, and try to soothe his pain. But it was in vain, the child sat on her knees till noon, and then died. In the morning the little boy ran out into the field full of life and glee, and at noon he was dead!

But where was Elisha when this sorrow fell on his friends? He was not at Shunem, he was at Carmel, the beautiful mountain which you see across the plain as you stand at Shunem. The Shunammite must have wished that Elisha had been at her house when her child died. He would have prayed for it while it was yet alive, and when it was dead, he would have comforted her and her husband. But Elisha was not with them. What, then, was she to do? First of all, she went up and laid the dead child on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him and went out, for she had made up her mind to go at once to Elisha. Next she went to her husband, who was still in the cornfield, and called unto him and said, *Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.*

Her husband wondered why she wished to go; they used to go sometimes when it was the New Moon feast, or on the Sabbath day to worship and pray with Elisha; but it was neither of these, and so her husband asked her, *Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day?*

But she did not grieve him by telling him, she only answered, *It shall be well:* and as he knew that she was a wise and prudent woman, he sent the young man and the ass. And she saddled the ass and said to her servant, *Drive and go forward, slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.*

So she went, and came unto the man of God to Mount Carmel.

And it came to pass, that when Elisha saw her afar off, he said to Gehazi, his servant,

Behold, yonder is that Shunammite. Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?

Gehazi hastened to meet her, and asked her what Elisha had told him, and the woman gave the strange answer, *It is well.*

She did not say the child is dead, but though her heart was faint and sad within her, and her lips would still tremble, she yet said, *It is well.*

The Shunammite said no more to Gehazi, but she rode on as fast as she could till she came to the man of God to the hill: and then she threw herself down at Elisha's feet and embraced them and wept.

When Gehazi saw this, he thought that she was troubling his master, and he came near to thrust her away. But Elisha forbade him saying, *Let her alone, for her soul is vexed within her, and the Lord hath hid from me and hath not told me the cause of her sorrow.*

Then the poor, sobbing mother said words like these to the prophet, 'Oh, why did you ask God to give me a child? It would have been better not to have had a son, than to lose him so soon!'

As soon as Elisha knew what was the matter, he gave his staff to Gehazi, and told him to run with all speed and lay the staff upon the face of the child.

But the mother of the child would not go with Gehazi, she clung to Elisha till he arose and followed her.

As they came near to the Shunammite's home, Gehazi met them and said, *The child is not awaked.*

When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead and laid upon the bed in the prophet's little room on the wall. Elisha went in and shut the door, and prayed unto the Lord, and he lay upon the child, and put his mouth on the child's mouth, and his eyes on the child's eyes, and his hands on the child's hands, and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then Elisha went away, and walked in the house to and fro. Then he stretched himself on the child again, and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

When Elisha saw this, he told Gehazi to call the Shunammite, and when she came

into the little chamber he said to her, *Take up thy son.*

She fell at his feet as she had done on Carmel, but then it was in terrible sorrow, now it is in the greatness of her joy; then she took up her son and went up with him to the house rejoicing and praising God.

There are many lessons of love and faith to be learned from this beautiful old-time story; but let us draw one from the Shunammite's strange answer to Gehazi on Mount Carmel. He asked, *Is it well with the child?* and she said, *It is well*, yet at the moment the child was lying cold and dead on Elisha's bed, and she knew it.

Did the Shunammite tell a lie? or was she glad that the child was dead? Did she not love it? Yes, she loved it dearly, yet she said, *It is well.* This shows her full trust in God. It was well, because God had done it, and what He does is always right.

She knew also, for Elisha must have taught her so, that heaven is happier than earth, and that her 'child's soul' was in Paradise, with Jesus who loves so well the lambs of His flock.

Oh, that all mothers who have to weep for their sweet children, taken from them by lingering sickness, or by death so sudden as that of the Shunammite's little son, may have love and trust strong enough to feel—

Though our hearts break at parting,
We will not rebel;
It is well with the child,
It is well—It is well.

GOD MADE ALL THINGS.

HARK! the little birds are singing!
Winter's gone and summer's near:
See, the tender grass is springing,
And the flowers will soon be here.

Who made the winter and the spring?
Who painted all the flowers?
Who taught the little birds to sing,
And made these hearts of ours?

Oh! 'tis God! how good He is!
He does every blessing give:
All this happy world is His:
Let us love Him while we live.



Elisha and the Shunammite.



EGYPTIAN POLITENESS.

THIS is the picture of a Janissary, or guard, in conversation with a merchant. member of the Pacha of Egypt's body- The janissary carries his official staff, and

is armed with sword and pistols ; but the merchant carries only his pipe and a scent-box in the shawl round his waist.

Among all Mahometans, it is a part of their religion to be polite and courteous. The Koran recommends that, when two persons meet, the salutation, 'Peace be with you,' should be given. The reply must always be, 'And on you be peace also.' It is a sin not to reply, though it is not a sin to omit the salutation in the first instance. These courtesies, however, are to be confined to men of their own creed. The mode of speaking to an European used to be, 'Dog of a Christian,' a term rarely used now, because the Christians have more power to resent it.

In the Koran there are rules laid down, also, to regulate common, every-day life. A person riding must always first salute him who is on foot, and a person walking must first salute him whom he finds sitting or standing still. The *teymeeneh* must sometimes be performed ; this consists of the inferior person laying his right hand upon his breast, and then putting it to his forehead and turban, bowing at the same time. When particular friends meet, both salute and perform the *teymeeneh*.

In paying visits, they never enter until they have sent in to obtain permission, and the visitor always seats himself at the lowest place, until the host shall invite him to 'come up higher.' This was the custom in the East in our Saviour's time (see Luke, xiv. 10), and it is so now. Many such customs have remained the same for thousands of years, although the races and the religion of the countries have changed.

The Eastern merchants are often rich men, and it is considered no disgrace for members of the highest ranks to engage in trade. Eastern history affords instances even of the sons of kings becoming merchants, and travelling about with their merchandise. Cairo used to be the chief seat of this traffic ; but for the last hundred years it has lost its old fame, and ceased to be the chief desire of a Mussulman trader's heart.

B.

A WHOLE FAMILY THRIVING ON SLUGS.

THE following story is told in a new work, entitled "Life in Normandy." The author is defending the frog-eating habits of the French peasantry by a reference to some actual occurrences on our own island :—"An Irish gravel-digger, not long ago, died at Sydenham, leaving his widow and family utterly destitute, save that he had built them a hovel against the side of the gravel pit, which was on the common. There the widow and the orphans lived, and it was observed that though they had no visible means of earning a livelihood they were fatter and rosier than any labourer's family in the parish. About this time hen-roosts were robbed and sheep were stolen in the neighbourhood, and the plump widow and her rosy family were at once set down for the thieves. A warrant was granted to search her house, and the policemen found what they deemed proof of her guilt. They took her in custody, and bore with them the proof in the shape of a good-sized cask, containing, as they said, the sheep salted and minced into morsels. The poor woman denied that the little salted morsels were mutton, but she refused to say what they were to the policemen. She told the magistrate, however, what they were. 'Send them fellows away, and I will tell your honour,' she said. Under the seal of secrecy she let out that they were salted slugs. She had seen them given in Ireland to a young man who was supposed to be in a consumption, and who grew fat and well on the diet ; and, failing other means of subsistence, she tried the same food for her starving children. She first tried the slugs fresh : they were found to be good and nourishing ; and then she took to salting them for winter use. Her plan was to drop the slugs into boiling water, and then to lay them with salt in a cask. The author concludes the story with the obvious moral, that no one need starve where there are plenty of black slugs to be got."



THE BEAR'S DINNER.

H, father! please tell us a story now, while you have nothing to do!"

So shouted one and another of a group of little ones, climbing around their father as he sat resting by the evening fire.

"Well, as I have 'nothing to do,' I suppose I must. What sort of a story shall it be?"

"A bear story," said one. "Oh, yes, tell us about the bear who stole a dinner!"

The father said that he had told them that story over and over again, but, as they wished it, he would tell it again.

"A good many years ago," he said, "before I was born, my father and mother went to live in the northern part of New York State. If you look on your map now, you will see towns and villages dotted about where then there were scarcely any settlements—nothing but thick woods."

"Bears in them?" asks a boy with wide-opened eyes.

"Yes, woods with bears in them—only think!"

"I shouldn't think your father and mother would have liked to go and live where the bears were," said little Polly.

"Oh, the bears did not often trouble settlers. I do not know that any ever came near my father's place. But when I was a little fellow climbing on my father's knee, just as you do now, he used to tell me this story about a man who settled out there—I suppose somewhere near them.

"This man had built a saw-mill some distance from his house, and often he used to go to the mill to work all day, taking his dinner with him.

"You have seen a saw-mill. You know it is a place where men saw big, heavy logs—the trunks of trees—into smooth boards, to build houses with.

"Well, one day the man had been hard at work all the morning at his mill, and when it drew near noon he began to feel

hungry, and thought he would stop and eat his dinner. So he sat down on a large log upon which the steam saw was working up and down, with his tin can by his side. Was he afraid of the saw? Oh, no; he could jump off at any moment, if he came too near the saw.

"While he was eating the good things which his wife had put up for him, and thinking of his work, his home, and his children, who should come up but a rough old bear!

"Bruin smelled the good smell of dinner, and thought he would put in for a share. So he quietly mounted the log, on the other side of the dinner can, and struck his nose into it, as if to say, 'Give me some.'

"The good man was somewhat startled, you may believe, by the appearance of such a visitor. Of course, he would not be so rude as to refuse him a share of the feast; but he was afraid that when Bruin had finished his dinner he might take it into his head to give him a loving hug by way of thanks—so he prudently withdrew to a safe distance, and gave up the whole to him. Bruin munched in perfect content, with his nose in the can and his back to the saw, while the owner of the dinner looked on from his hiding-place, and wished for a gun.

"But in the meantime the log had been gradually working up toward the saw, and now all at once the bear felt a slight nip in his tail. At this he growled, and gave an angry shake, moving a little further along the log. Presently he got another nip, and growled more savagely, but could not turn from his savoury dinner. But when he was moved a third time within reach of the saw, and felt another bite, his bear nature could stand it no longer; so he turned in a rage, and hugged the old saw with all his might. And what happened then? Why, of course, he was cut right in two! and the man had bear-meat enough for a number of dinners, besides nice bear-skin caps for his little boys to keep their ears warm.

"Now, you have been told to look out for a moral in a story. What shall we learn from this? Why, 1. That he who



The Bear.

steals a dinner is likely to pay for it ;
2. That he who flings himself into a passion
against anything which annoys him, will

be apt to get sorely cut and wounded
thereby, and make matters very much
worse."



MY LITTLE BOY'S POCKET;
OR, THE LITTLE PHILOSOPHER.

DO you know what's in my pottet?
Such a lot of treasures in it!

Listen, now, while I bedin it;
Such a lot of sings it hold,
And all there is, you sall be told;
Every sin dat's in my pottet,
And when, and where, and how I dot it!

First of all, here's in my pottet
 A beauty shell—I picked it up;
 And here's the handle of a tup
 That somebody has broke at tea;
 The shell's a hole in it you see;
 Nobody knows that I have dot it,
 I keep it safe here, in my pottet!

And here's my ball, too, in my pottet;
 And here's my pennies, one, two, fee,
 That aunty Mary gave to me;
 To-morrow-day I'll buy a spade,
 When I'm out walking with the maid;
 I can't put *dat* here in my pottet,
 But I can use it when I've dot it.

Here's some more sins in my pottet!
 Here's my lead, and here's my string,
 And once I had an iron ring,
 But through a hole it lost one day;
 And this is what I always say—
 A hole's the worse sin in a pottet,
 Have it mended when you've dot it!

J. E. C. F.

A PLUCKY LITTLE FELLOW.

THE Belgian papers tell the following story of a brave little boy only eight years old, the son of a labourer named Malhaux, living at Farcienness in Belgium. One evening, some weeks since, he was sent by his mother to fetch a loaf from a baker's on the opposite side of the railway. On his return, when passing a level crossing near the Farcienness Station, he saw a train approaching, and in his alarm he stumbled and fell. He, nevertheless, had the presence of mind to roll into the space between the rails and lie still. Unhappily, the clearing-iron caught his blouse and dragged him along till the train stopped at the station; the wheels had meanwhile passed over one of his arms and cut it nearly off. When he was set free he said, looking at his mangled limb, "Pray, do not tell mother!" and he asked the bystanders to fetch his loaf. It was found necessary to cut off the arm, and though the chloroform did not make him insensible, he bore the operation with the utmost courage, and only asked once or twice if the surgeons would soon have done. His arm is now healing, and the little fellow has returned to school as gay and as cheerful as his companions.

'TRIFLES.

A FRIEND called on Michael Angelo, the great sculptor, at a time when he was finishing a statue. Some time afterwards he called again: the sculptor was still at his work. His friend, looking at the figure, exclaimed, 'You have been idle since I saw you last.'

'By no means,' replied the sculptor; 'I have touched this part again, and polished that: I have softened this feature, and brought out this muscle: I have given more expression to this lip, and more energy to this limb.'

'Well, well,' said his friend, 'but all these are trifles.'

'It may be so,' replied Michael Angelo, 'but recollect that trifles make perfection, and perfection is not a trifle.'

LITTLE HUMPY.

(Continued from page 96.)



ANNIE stole to the entrance of the little court on Monday morning, with a beating heart, and looked down the street which she must cross to get to the school-house. It seemed as busy as ever, and she was thinking how she could make her way through the carriages and horses, when a voice behind her said, "Hallo, little Humpy! what are you after?" It was the same boy who had spoken so roughly to her once before, and without answering him now, Annie made a dart across the pavement, intending to run at once over the street, but the boy seized her as he had done before, only not so roughly this time, saying, "You listen to me, I'm not going to hurt you. I heard your aunt telling my mother you was going to school this morning, so I thought maybe you'd like some help across the street: it's an ugly one to cross. Here, take my hand."

So he piloted Annie across the street, and left her standing at the door of the girls' school, with these words,—“Now you wait there for me after school, and I'll come for you again.”

How gratefully Annie thanked him you may guess; she walked up the steps into the schoolroom, feeling as if nothing would vex her now: but the first greeting made her wish herself back in her lonely room.

“Why, here comes little Humpty to school, after all!” cried out Maria Hayes, the girl who had first given Annie the name of ‘Humpty,’ “I thought, Miss, you knew too much to learn any more; but I'm glad to see you all the same;” and she made a low curtsy as she spoke.

“Oh, Maria, what a shame!” said some of the girls; but others repeated “Little Humpty!” and laughed.

The clock striking nine brought in Mrs. Allen, the schoolmistress, and put a stop to all talking. But there was plenty of vexation for Annie still; every now and then she would catch a whisper of “Little Humpty,” and she would see a pretty little girl who was in the same class with herself put up her shoulder, when no one was looking, in imitation of her. She had, however, a great pleasure that morning, for about eleven o'clock Mr. Thomas came in to give a Bible lesson to each class in turn. Annie felt too shy to look up when he came to her class, and her voice shook when it came to her turn to read.

Mr. Thomas took no notice of her then, but when the school was dismissed, and she was waiting a little behind the others, he came up to her and said, “Well done, little Annie! I am very glad to see you here.” Then he turned to speak to the schoolmistress, and Annie, made quite happy by this little bit of praise, followed the last of the girls out of the room.

She found her new friend, Dan, waiting for her. “Why, I began to think you weren't coming, Humpty,” he said, as he gave her his hand. “Now, you remember that every day I am to take you to school; you will always wait for me, won't you? and whenever you want a friend in anything, come to me.”

“Yes, I will,” said Annie; “and thank you, Dan, very much.”

“Stuff!” said the boy: “I don't want to be thanked. I'll tell you what, Humpty, you're like a little sister I had once. I'm sorry I ever hurt you, but I must hurt some one when I'm in a rage, and you came in for it once. You shan't again, though.”

So a firm friendship was established between those two, and many a good service did Dan do for Annie, saving her again and again from the teasings which the children of the court, led on by Maria Hayes, were always ready to practise on her. Maria was one of the head girls in the second class, in which Annie had been placed, and as such she had it in her power to vex and annoy the little deformed girl very much indeed. She seemed to have a special spite against little Humpty (the only name by which Annie was known in Elm Court, except to her aunt), and day after day did she find some fresh way of tormenting her. Annie bore all with patience; she tried to do as Mr. Thomas had told her, to repay good for evil; and much as the children loved to tease her when her protector Dan was out of the way, yet, strange to say, all but Maria soon learned to come to her in any trouble, feeling sure that she would forgive and forget the vexations of perhaps only an hour before.

There was one thing that little Humpty did for them of which they knew nothing, though it was in truth the greatest kindness she could possibly have done them. She was not a clever child, though, from having been well taught, she had taken her place in the second class. She never made very bright answers,—her lessons were always well learnt; but she thought a great deal of what she heard, particularly of her Bible lessons. Her class were learning the Sermon on the Mount, two verses at a time; and at all his lessons Mr. Thomas explained the verses that had been learned. They came to the one, “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you.” Annie thought Mr. Thomas looked most at her as he was speaking about this verse, and saying



Dan Waiting for 'Little Humpty.'

how Christ prayed for the Jews who put Him to death, even when He was on the Cross, and that little children could do as He did, by praying for any one who was unkind to them.

Some of the girls thought no more of

his words after they were said ; they never prayed for themselves, much less for any one else : but from that day forward in her prayers night and morning did Annie ask for blessings on her persecutors.

(Concluded in our next.)

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

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One Penny



Arthur on his way to Tony's Cottage.

"ONE MOONLIGHT NIGHT."



THIS is, you will think, a curious title for a story, but as I am going to tell you exactly what happened "One Moonlight Night" many years ago, I could think of no better name for my tale. Other nights in plenty have past over my head since then, and the moon has shone and waned, I am afraid to say how often. But out of all these there is not one I recollect so vividly as that connected with my story, which has past years since, when I was a boy of ten, and, as I fear you will say, a very naughty boy for my age.

At that time I was living with my parents on a little island many thousand miles away from England. I was born there, it was a beautiful place, and it was my *home*, and I loved it dearly.

Our house stood on a hill which rose among a circle of other high hills; below it again the country gradually sloped down to the sea-shore. Many of the hills were rocky and barren, but their shapes were bold, and the valleys with their rushing streams were green enough. Behind our house, farther inland, the ridges were crested with wood and covered with pastures of rippling grass. Our house was quite a country place, only one story high, and on three sides of the ground-floor was a broad verandah with a sloping roof, which was a foot or two below the bedroom windows. Along this roof, we youngsters used to run like so many rabbits, out of one window and in at another, to the nurse's horror. Many were the rules made against this practice, but somehow they were never fully carried out, and the verandah roof still continued to be a favourite pathway. It was so much more exciting than going along the passage, and, moreover, no nursery maid dare follow us.

From my home down to the beach was a mile of steep scramble, but I was used

to it; generally I went with my father, but every now and then I was allowed to go by myself. Near the sea lived my first boy friend, Tony Grant; he was a year or two my senior, but lame, poor little fellow, and could only creep along with the aid of a crutch. When I say Tony was my only friend, I do not mean that I had no brothers and sisters, but May and Charlie were half babies still, and Lucy, who was one year younger than I, was only a girl, and used to cry if she got vexed, or hot, though she could whistle as well as I could myself, and climbed like any cat.

It was my father who first took me to see Tony, and suggested my being kind to a lad who could not enjoy life as I did. I think the Grants were favourites of his. I remember his saying they were "superior people," and I know their cottage was better than other cottages I went into. There were three rooms instead of two to begin with, and then the floors were boarded instead of being merely earth beaten hard. The fire had a proper chimney built for its smoke, and the place looked clean and neat. The garden was large for the size of the cottage, and besides the flowers and a large yam-bed* down by the stream, there was a good vegetable plot, and the peach and fig-trees were well tended, instead of being left to grow as they could.

John Grant was a fisherman, but he did not think he must necessarily be idle during all the hours he was off the water. In his spare time he took care of this garden, and sold the fruit and vegetables to the ships which touched at our island. He and his wife were Mullattos, a shade yellower than a Spaniard might be, with fine eyes and blue-black hair. They had several children besides Antony, but they always seemed to think most of him, because, I suppose, he was weak and sickly.

When once I had made friends with Tony it was curious how many ways I found in which I could give him pleasure. First of all, he was sure to brighten up and be glad to see me when I came, and would

* The yam is a common vegetable in the West Indies. It is a root that is baked and eaten.

limp by my side to a little distance among the rocks, where we used to sit down and watch the big waves come tumbling in to the shore, while I talked fast and quickly that I might say all I wished before it was time to go, and Tony listened with a quiet smile on his thin face, and a real interest in all my scrapes and successes that I have since often looked for vainly, in friends of older years.

One day at dinner my father said that some fine grapes on the table would be nice for Tony on the hot afternoons, and that if I *liked* I might take him my share. I was allowed to lay a large bunch among the cool green leaves in a basket that Lucy lent me, and to take it down to the shore that very evening. I watched Tony eat some, and saw how he enjoyed them. From that time I was allowed, whenever I wished it, to put aside my share of pudding or fruit for my friend; and the pleasure I had in giving them to him quite made up for any self-denial there might have been in doing without them myself.

But now I had a far grander scheme on hand. I had promised Tony that I would save up my money and buy him a boat to sail on the rock-ponds. Close to Grant's cottage a broad flat reef ran out into the sea, and when the tide was down you might find there clear pools of sea-water an inch or two deep, swarming with shoals of tiny fish; charming places to sail a boat in we thought them; and as Tony had only an old, shabby affair that his father had made for him ever so long ago, I had promised myself great pleasure in seeing how he would like a smart new one.

Altogether, my patience had been not a little tried in this matter. First, saving money enough had been a much longer business than I expected, and then, when my purse was brimming over I had to wait nearly a week before either my father or our servant James went to the Port.

However, on this very morning James had been to town, and brought back with him a bran new boat, the best he could find in the store. There it lay on the dining-room table in all its glory of white sails and bright paint. In a high state of delight I walked round and round it, and

admired my treasure from every point of view, only wishing my father and mother had been there to praise it also. They had gone that morning to spend the day with some friends who lived several miles off, and did not intend coming home that night. Meanwhile we children were in charge of our nurse Betsy.

Though I wished my parents to see the boat, I had no intention of waiting until they returned before taking it to Tony. It so happened that I had not seen him for a longer time than usual; and when I had last been there it was a sultry afternoon, and Tony did not care to stir from the arm-chair his father had put for him under a bamboo clump. He seemed so drooping and languid that he could hardly listen to my talk, and my father had bid me be careful not to tire him, and taken me away in a very short while. So now I felt doubly anxious to take him what I was sure would do him good, and I was walking down the avenue at my quickest pace when Betsy spied me.

"Where are you going, Master Arthur?" she said.

"I'm going to the shore, Betsy, to take Tony Grant this boat; is it not a jolly one?"

"Yes, it's neat enough," said Betsy (looking at the vessel without, as I felt, taking in half its merits); "but, Master Arthur, you mustn't go down to Grant's to-day. It's too late, it's five o'clock now, and it'll be dark long before you can get back. Come and play with Miss Lucy, like a good boy, and to-morrow when your father comes home he'll take you."

"I don't want to play with Lucy," I said, "and I will go down to the shore. I know mother would let me if she was at home. You are always so cross."

"As to crossness," said Betsy, "I know some one who is pretty often cross too; and I mean what I say, Master Arthur; you're *not* to go!"

If my mother had been at home, perhaps I might have defied Betsy, but just before she started in the morning she had made me promise that I would try to be a good boy, and do what nurse told me; and the remembrance of this promise kept



" We used to watch the big waves come tumbling in."

P. 115.

me from open rebellion. Sulkily enough I walked back to the house and put the boat up in my own little room. I was full of indignation at Betsy's tyranny. "Oh, mother," I sobbed, as I leant my head against the window-sill, "I wish you

wouldn't go away, we are always miserable when you do; and I believe that horrid, spiteful old Betsy does it on purpose."

At eight o'clock I had to go to bed. The house felt so dull and lonely. No father or mother to read my verses to, or

to kiss me as they wished me good-night. Betsy stood watching me undress, impatient to join her friends in the kitchen; and when she had seen me lie down she marched off with the candle, and as she went out I heard *her turn the key in the lock*. Oh, Betsy, Betsy, you were not a wise woman! I was really getting into a better temper then, but this insulting act of hers made me as bad as ever again. How *dare* she do so? I thought to myself. Mother never treats us in that way; besides, if I wanted to get out *she* shouldn't keep me in; she forgets the verandah roof! Fuming and fretting over my trouble, giving way to my evil temper instead of striving to check it, I formed at last my plan: to wait until every one was in bed, then to dress quietly, get out of the window on to the roof, and go down to the shore—the moon would rise a little after nine, for I had heard father say so when settling with mother whether they should come back that night. Tony should have his boat the first thing next morning at all events, and wouldn't he be delighted when his father showed it to him? What made this plan possible was, that since I had grown restive under nursery rule, my mother had let me sleep in a little room opening out of her bedroom, while the nursery and Betsy's domain were separated from it by a long passage.

It was hard work for me to keep awake until the hour was late enough, as I thought, for my start. Once or twice I went to sleep, and then jumped up in a fright. The third time this happened I felt perfectly sure that there was no one in the house stirring but myself. The moon was shining through the blind and lighting the room, and I could not hear any noise of people moving about.

As quietly as possible I dressed, and with my boat under my arm, ran along the verandah roof. At one end of the house a bank rose, so that the eaves there were not above a foot and a half from the ground. Down I jumped, but before crossing the front windows to reach the avenue, I stopped for a minute to listen.

It is years ago now, and yet I remember perfectly the beauty of the night. The

flowers and trees were heavy with dew, and over them all the moonlight shone with wonderful brightness. Just before me was an orange-tree, laden with golden and green fruit, while a second crop of snowy blossom was filling the air with its fragrance. Except the wind in the tree-tops there was no sound to be heard, and I ran on again. Past the solitary coconut-tree I was so fond of trying to climb, past the pomegranate-hedge along the lawn, until I reached the gate of the drive. Once through that, I did not so much fear being missed and pursued, and I walked on leisurely down the road into the valley below our house. The highroad crossed it and then led up the opposite hill, but *my* path was only a foot-track along by the stream,—down, down, until I reached the shore.

The little valley was green and quiet, and the cool rock stream was a favourite place of ours for picking watercresses, but I did not think of that to-night. I needed all my care in going down the slippery path, for a fall would injure my boat. Certainly a cautious English mother or nurse would have shrieked with horror to watch me clambering. But there was not much real danger, for I believe I could have gone that path blindfold, and then I was perfectly fearless. When I reached less difficult ground I still went steadily on, for I found that if I stopped at all the silence and loneliness of the night gave me a feeling of awe I could hardly bear. Once, however, I stopped. It was when I reached the shore, and could see across the ravine, by the light in Grant's window, that he was actually not asleep yet. Seeing his candle burning gave me a sense of companionship, and I turned to look at the wide ocean spread before me in all its silver glories. The beach was one of large stones, and the great waves as they rose curled their crests in the moonshine and then flung themselves in a sheet of white foam along the coast, to retreat again the next instant with a seething, rattling roar, among the pebbles. Often and often since then have I longed for that sound—the thunder of a mid Atlantic wave on a rocky shore.

(To be continued.)



THE LUCKY BAG.

I WANT to tell the children a story about 'The Lucky Bag,' to see if they ever knew anything like it.

On this long and narrow ship, there are more than two hundred men, and every man has a bag, instead of a trunk, to keep his clothes and things in.

Once a-week, the boat-swain whistles on his pipe, 'Bags up!' and then every man may bring his bag up on deck into the wind and sunshine, and empty it, and put it in good order. Such lots of things as they pour out! Shirts, trousers, caps, tobacco, twine, scissors, needles, pipes, combs, shoes, and many a thing besides. So the sailors have a good time putting everything in order, and packing it away in the bag again, ready for the whistle, 'Bags down!'

If any man leaves anything lying around loose or out of place, whoever picks it up takes it to the 'lucky bag.'

This lucky bag is a big, black bag, as large as two of the common bags; and it hangs up by one of the masts, with its mouth open, ready to swallow anything. A man lays his knife down and forgets it. It goes to the lucky bag, and the man has to come away back to the captain, or some officer, and tell him, 'Sir, my knife's got in the lucky bag;' and then the captain will fine the man for being so careless, and then let him get the knife again.

One day, the captain's servant bought two nice chickens for us to eat, and, when he came from market, he laid them down while he put away some pears and peaches. He forgot the chickens, and pretty soon both the chickens were chucked into the lucky bag, where they kept up a great cackling. All the men laughed, and said, 'Captain can't have his dinner to-day! Captain's chickens are in the lucky bag.'

Sure enough, we had no chickens for dinner that day; and the servant had to buy them again from the lucky bag, and

pay as much for them as they cost at market.

Once a-week, when the bag gets full, they take everything out, and sell them at auction; 'lucky-bag auction.'

And now you know what a lucky bag is—and lucky bags make the men very neat and careful.—T. K. BEECHER, in *'The Little Corporal.'*

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

ELISABETH, MOTHER OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.



THE prophets of Old Testament time had foretold that, before the coming of Christ, a messenger should be sent to make ready the way before Him. We have now to tell about the mother of that messenger.

There were living in Judea, in the days of Herod the king, an aged priest named Zacharias and his wife, whose name was Elisabeth. They were among the few Jews who truly served God in those days, and they were waiting and hoping for the coming of the Saviour. It is said of them, that they were both righteous, before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. (St. Luke, i. 6.)

Zacharias was a Levite, and took his part in the sacred duties of the priest's office when his turn came round. One day, while all the people were praying outside, Zacharias went into the temple of the Lord, and as he was burning incense, there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord; and when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall have a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth; for he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, and many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

This was joyful news to Zacharias, but he could not believe it; so the angel said to him, *I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak to thee and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words.*

The people who were outside wondered that Zacharias was so long in the temple; when at last he came out, he could not speak to them; he was dumb, but he made signs to them that he had seen a vision. When he went home he could not speak to his wife Elisabeth, but he would tell her by writing all that he had seen and heard, and what a great honour God had promised them.

But before their little son was born, Mary, to whom the Angel Gabriel had announced that she was to be the mother of the promised Messiah, came from Nazareth to visit her cousin Elisabeth who lived at Hebron, a journey of about seventy miles. When Elisabeth heard the voice of Mary, she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and knew that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah, and wondered at the great honour bestowed on her, and said, *Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*

Then Mary in reply poured out that song of thanksgiving which we know so well from its use in our Evening prayer in church, and which begins, *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; for He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*

Mary stayed three months with her cousin Elisabeth, and never were there under any one roof two mothers so honoured of God as these two; the one the mother of him who was to prepare the way for the Saviour, the other the mother of that very Saviour Himself.

After Mary had returned to her distant home in Nazareth, Elisabeth's little son was born. There was great joy in the house of Zacharias, and Elisabeth's neighbours and her cousins came and rejoiced

with her. Zacharias rejoiced too, but he could not speak to tell how happy he was.

When the baby was eight days old he was circumcised and given up to God, as the children of Christian parents now are in baptism, and then he was to be named. The angel had told Zacharias that the child's name should be John. Elisabeth knew this, and wished to have it so; but all her neighbours and her friends wished the child to be called *Zacharias, after the name of his father.* His mother answered, *Not so, but he shall be called John.*

They said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

Then they made signs to his father, and asked how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing-table (that is, a writing-tablet, or, as we might say, a slate) and wrote on it, His name is John.

This showed his obedience and his faith, and so the punishment of his unbelief was taken away, and his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God. He was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied of the great mercy which God was now going to show to His people in giving them a Saviour. His words took the form of a Hymn of Praise, which we often sing in our morning service in church, and which begins, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people.*

The name John means 'the grace and mercy of God;' and was a most fitting name for one who was to be the forerunner of the God of all grace, and of Jesus who, in great mercy, died to take away the sin of the world.

Of Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, we hear no more after this time of rejoicing. Being already old, it is likely that both she and her husband fell soon after into a peaceful grave; leaving their orphan child to the care of Him from whom they had so wonderfully received him; and that they were thus saved the pain and sorrow of mourning over his cruel death, when he was beheaded by order of Herod.



Elisabeth, mother of John the Baptist.



INDIAN WOMAN MOURNING THE DEAD.

THIS sad picture shows us a Red Indian woman of North America at the grave of her dead husband. She has come to mourn when the moon is at

its full, and the spirit of the departed is supposed to be near; and she has kindled a few sticks as an offering of her love.

The Indians bury their dead in ceme-

teries, near the spots where they encamp from time to time. The graves are of various kinds; sometimes separate, marked by stones and posts, and sometimes by a huge mound of earth, beneath which the bones of a whole tribe lie. Some tribes do not bury at all, but suspend the dead in the air, between poles.

It is considered by the Indians a great virtue to respect a grave, and a great insult to disturb one. Not very long ago, two tribes quarrelled, and prepared to fight. The night before the battle a young Indian warrior stole out from his own tents, and came to the cemetery belonging to the opposite tribe. There, as quietly as he could, he rifled many of the graves, took down the flags of mourning, tore up the earth, and overturned some of the stones. When he had finished, he came back and told what he had done, and the delight of his tribe at the news was great. There would be no common fight next day now—it would be war.

The injured tribe next morning discovered the havoc, and their alarm was as great as the joy of the others. They felt that they had been disgraced beyond hope of ever making peace. In their distress, the whole tribe made a vow never to rest till every member, old and young, of the other side should be slain.

When death enters an Indian tribe, the relatives mourn by loud wailing for days, painting their faces and tearing their clothes. There is no bright side to an Indian's sorrow. He knows nothing of the Christian's hope of heaven. He looks forward, indeed, to a future state, but he believes it will be one of endless hunting and fishing, where the plains will be full of buffalo and deer, and the lakes full of fish, and where his own wigwam will be so snugly placed as to be secure from all attack.

B.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

THE following specimens of the Lord's Prayer, in the style in use at various periods, will exhibit the changes which our language has undergone during the last six centuries:—

A.D. 1258.—Fader ure in heune, haleweide beith thi neune, cumen thi kuneriche, thi wille beoth idon in heune and in erthe. The eurych dawe bried, gif ous thilk dawe. And vorzif ure dettes as vi vorzifen ure dettours. And lene us nought into temptacioun, bot delyvor ous of uvel. Amen.

A.D. 1300.—Fadir our in hevene, Halewyd by thi name, thi kingdom come, Thi wille be done as in hevene and in erthe, Oure urchen dayes brede give us to day. And forgive us oure dettes as we forgive our dettours. And lede us not in temptation; Bote delyvere us of yvel. Amen.

A.D. 1380.—Oure Fadir that art in heunes hallowid be thy name, thi kingdom come to, be thi wille don in earthe as in heune, geve to us this day oure breed *oure othe substaunce*, forgeue to us our dettis as we forgauen to oure dettouris, lede us not into temptation; but delyuer us from evul. Amen.

A.D. 1534.—Ooure Father which arte in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Let thy kingdom come. Thy wyall be fullfilled as well in earth as it ys in heaven. Geve vs this daye our dayly breede. And forgive vs our treaspases, even as we forgive our treaspacers. And leade vs not into temptacioun; but deliver vs from evell. For thyne is the kyngedome and the power and the glorie for ever. Amen.

A.D. 1582.—Ovr Father which art in heauen, sanctified be thy name. Let thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, in earth also. Giue vs to-day our supersubstantial bread. And forgieue us ovr dettes, as we also forgieue our detters. And lead us not into temptation. But delieur us from evil. Amen.

A.D. 1611.—Our Father which art in heauen, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Give us this day our dayly bread. And forgieue us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lede vs not into temptation, but deliuer us from euil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for euer. Amen.

INSIDE OF A HUT IN BENGAL.

WE have here the inside of a peasant's hut in Bengal, North India—a little box twelve feet square.

There are, of course, various kinds of houses for the natives, some of which are very fine, but this is only the house of the poor field-labourer. Such dwellings are seen sometimes in villages, but more often in open ground, near rice-fields and places where the jungle has been cleared.

The hut is built entirely with mud, except the roof, which is of thatch, laid across poles. A little hole is left for a window, and a large one for a door, or rather a doorway, for there is no door. There is no stove or place for cooking—that is done outside the house, in a hole dug in the ground.

The hut in the picture, though only that of a field-labourer, has some marks about it which are not common—viz., cleanliness and order; besides this, the woman's dress is neat and tidy, and we see some books laid in the window, which show that somebody there has learned to read. These things at once mark the dwelling of a *Christian* family. When books take the place of the ugly clay idol seen in all heathen houses, there is no doubt about it.

A word now about the inmates and the furniture. The woman carries her child, not in her arms, but upon her hip, which is the common way of nursing throughout India. Two sturdy boys upon the floor are fishing for grains of rice in a large basket; the elder one has his foot upon a winnowing-fan, used in clearing the rice of dust. At the back is a turned-up *charpay*, or bedstead, with the bed-clothes rolled up on the top. Just in front is a *churka*, or spinning-wheel, and behind the boy a *hookah* on its cocoa-nut stand.

The wages of the Bengal labourer is six *pice*, or three farthings a-day, a very small sum with us, but in India enough to supply the wants of a whole family, whose only food is rice, and whose clothing is spun at home. There is also no rent to pay for the hut.

PIGS IN PERIL.

ABOUT every five or six years, numerous springs of water break out in the winter seasons in the chalk-hills of the south of England. These springs are called 'Bournes,' and they last often for five or six weeks, flooding the valleys and low lands.

One of these springs breaks out from between two beech-trees, high on the downs in M—— Park, in Surrey, and flows down the coombes of the hills to the valleys, where it spreads out and covers the land. It then passes to the town of Croydon, where it falls into the river Wandle, and so flows on to the Thames.

This Surrey 'bourne' broke out in the spring of 1866. It rose suddenly in a night out of its secret spring in the hills, which had been dry, and over which the wild flowers had waved for several years, and next morning there was a rapid river many miles long. People had forgot the bourne, and built houses in its dry bed, and that morning they found the water coming over their door-sills and rising up the walls; farms were overflowed, and the crops drowned.

It was a striking sight to see a mighty river, here widening into a lake and there narrowing to a torrent, in the quiet valleys which but a day before had been green and beautiful, with the young lambs frisking about them.

Much damage was caused, yet there were some amusing incidents, one of which is shown in the picture. A farmer had brought home two pigs the night before in a waggon, where he had left them for the night. Next morning the pigs were heard squealing, and on the farmer's men rising, they found the waggon stranded in a shallow lake, like a wreck, with its inmates in great peril. The pigs had to be landed in a boat.

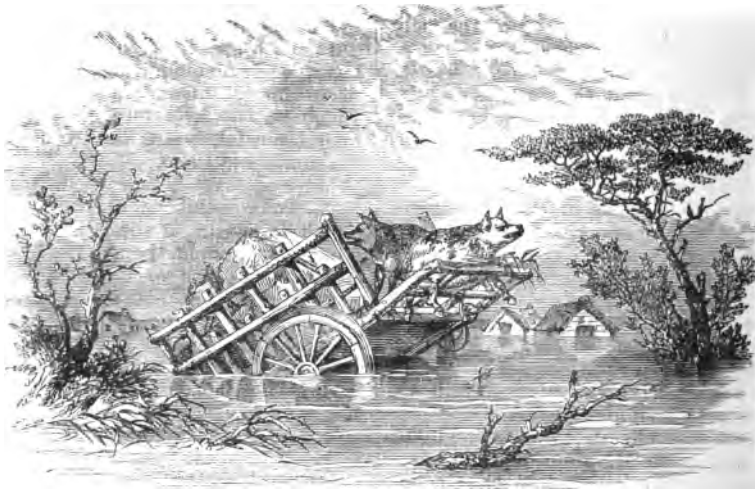
The bourne flowed for a month, and it was calculated that 1000 gallons of water rose from the spring every minute throughout the whole time.

B.



Inside of a Hut in Bengal.

P. 123.



Figs in Peril.

P. 123.

A SAGACIOUS HORSE.

THERE is in Maldon a very clever horse, which I think you would like to hear about. He comes early in the morning alone from his home which is about a quarter of a mile off, and stands at a corner of the street at the bottom of the steep hill on which Maldon is built, and there he waits till his master's carts come with the railway goods for delivery in the town; he is then harnessed on to help to pull up the hill, having done this he is let loose, and comes down to his corner *very steadily* where he waits till he is again wanted. He takes the opportunity of a spare interval to go home to his dinner, after which he returns to his corner. His last job in the day is to help to draw an omnibus up the hill which leaves the railway station at six o'clock in the evening, and when that is done he comes friskily down the hill, looking very pleased because he knows that his day's work is finished. He does not now stop at his corner as before, but he goes straight home to his master's stable. Sometimes, however, if the six o'clock train be late, he will not wait for it, but trots off when he thinks the proper time is come.

SYDNEY.



"PERPETUAL MOTION."

ABOUT twenty years ago, there was a shopboy in Dublin, known at first as Johnny Morgan, but afterwards called by the half-jeering nick-name of 'Perpetual Motion.' He had learned the worth of his own soul, and so had learned the worth of other souls. Every Sunday morning, therefore, he was to be seen running from door to door in Mountjoy Square, that he might collect the members of a Bible class. He never stopped, till, like a shepherd's dog, he had found all his stray sheep, and brought them oncemore under the Shepherd's watch and care.

What became of that boy? Having begun to run well, did he faint in the race? No. That same 'Perpetual Motion' was afterwards sent into a missionary field. His activity was first seen in the humbler efforts of a catechist. And when the cate-

chist had purchased a 'good degree,' it was shown in the labours of a successful missionary.

What was the secret of his usefulness? Just this and nothing more: whenever the question arose about any service, 'Who will do it?' he said, 'I will do it.' Reader! would you learn how you can do much for Christ and for precious souls? Be always ready to say, when any service in your power is needed, 'I will do it.'

THE MOTHER'S CHOICE.

ONE evening sat around the fire
(A pleasant sight to see),
Two children at their mother's side,
And one upon her knee.

"Mother!" a dark-haired boy exclaimed,
"A sailor, let me roam
To north, south, east, and west, but yet
Come back to you and home."

"No, Edward," cried the second boy;

"No treacherous sea for me:

A soldier bold with plume and sword—
A soldier will I be."

"Nay," said the third, "but I would wear
A surplice, hood, and stole,
Would read the prayers, the sermon preach,
And visit sick and whole."

"My children," said that mother dear,

"I care not what you be—

Or soldier, sailor, clergyman,
It matters not to me,

So you be good, and brave, and kind,

Alike to rich and poor,

For such find welcome here on earth,
And enter heaven's door."

LITTLE HUMPY.

(Continued from p. 112).



AND so the winter passed away, and bright spring days came: the single elm-tree, which gave its name to Elm Court, put out its fresh leaves, and the little sooty sparrows twittered in its branches, and bathed in the gutters; and Dan used to take little Humpy down to look at the flowers in the shop which a florist had set up in the dingy city. She was becoming her own bright self again now; and

"It is all Mr. Thomas's doing," her aunt declared, "getting her to go to school and think of others instead of herself."

"I wish, Aunt Anne," said the child one day, "I wish I could do something for Maria Hayes—something that would make her love me; she hates me now, she says."

"She's the only one hereabouts that does then, child; that's all I can say. We had better set up a nursery if there's always to be the crowd of children here that there was when I came home to-night."

It was Saturday, and on that day little Humpy had generally a regular "nursery" of small children. "There, do get along

to Humpy, will you?" was the cry of the mothers on that grand cleaning-day, which being a holiday, was, of course, the occasion of all sorts of troubles.—"Get along to Humpy, she'll manage you." And Humpy did manage them in a wonderful way, keeping them quiet and happy, hour after hour, when their own sisters would have slapped and scolded them.

Little by little the practice of teasing Humpy was dying out, even among the elder girls, who had been her greatest persecutors: how, indeed, could they torment one whose greatest pleasure was in giving pleasure to others, and doing kindnesses for them? Maria Hayes still, however, held out; would the day ever come when good would overcome evil with her?

One beautiful May morning, when it was so lovely out-of-doors, even in London, that it was difficult to attend to lessons, Mr. Thomas came into the girls' school with a friend. After speaking a few words to Mrs. Allen, this gentleman came forward and said, "Now, children, I am going to ask you some questions all round. There are six classes, I see. The four out of each class who answer best shall come down on Thursday to my house in the country, and spend a long day there."

You may imagine what a stir these words excited amongst the children, some of whom had never seen the country, and had no notion what it meant; while others, like little Humpy, had spent some years of their childhood there, and could picture to themselves the bright green of the trees and fields, and the gay colours of the flowers, and the sweet singing of the birds.

"I shall take my questions out of the Bible," said the gentleman, "for that is the book we ought to know better than any other."

Then he began, and went from one class to another till the twenty-four girls were fixed upon, and told to stand out in the middle of the room, and wait in school after the others. Little Humpy was amongst them, to her own great surprise, as well as that of most of her school-fellows. She was usually so slow in making up her mind as to the exact words she should use

in answering a question, that she was often passed over as careless or dull; but she had paid so much attention to her Bible-lessons, and was so eager to see the country in all its spring loveliness, that she answered to-day some questions which had puzzled the head girls in the class.

What was her delight on reaching the bottom of the steps (when, after hearing about the time of setting off, and one or two other things, the little party was dismissed), to find from her friend Dan, who was, as usual, waiting for her, that he too, with twenty-three other boys, was to go down to that gentleman's house on the same day! Her happiness was quite complete then; but as she was turning into her aunt's room with a very bright face, she heard her name spoken by some one under the elm-tree.

It was Maria Hayes, who was saying in a loud, angry voice, "It was all little Humpty's fault. I was going to answer I don't know how many questions, only I couldn't think what I ought to say, and then she snapped us up. You know she did. I should have gone, I am sure, if it hadn't been for her. Nasty little thing! I shall hate her worse than ever now!"

"Hate me worse than ever!" thought poor little Humpty; "I'm so sorry! And it really was not my fault. I was obliged to answer when the gentleman looked at me." She took her dinner from the cupboard, and began cutting it very slowly and sorrowfully, while tears rolled down her cheeks. Presently some thought seemed to strike her; she pushed her plate away, and putting on her bonnet again, went out into the little yard. She looked round a minute or two; all was quiet now, as Maria had gone in. With quick steps, little Humpty made her way to the street, and without waiting to think, set off across it, and turned up the bye-way that led to the school-house.

"Maria Hayes, I want to speak to you. Go to my room till I come," said Mrs. Allen, after lessons that afternoon.

"What have I done, I wonder?" said Maria, shrugging her shoulders, and making a grimace at the girl nearest her.

Half-an-hour afterwards, Annie, who had, as usual, gone straight home, heard a knock at the door, and ran to open it. There stood Maria, with very red eyes, but with a soft look in her face that little Humpty had never seen there before.

"What did you do it for?" she asked, stepping into the room as soon as the door was opened.

"Because—because—" stammered little Humpty. "Oh, Maria, won't you be friends with me?"

"Friends with you! yes, indeed, I will! I'll never say an unkind word to you again;" and Maria stooped down and kissed the anxious face that was turned to her. "But, Humpty, I won't go to the country instead of you—that I won't!"

"You must, you must—you don't know how beautiful it is. I lived there so long, you know. You will go, won't you, dear Maria?"

And Maria did go, and came back wild with delight, with a cowslip ball in her pocket, and with her hands full of bluebells and all kinds of spring flowers for her "dear little Humpty," as she ever after called the child whom she had really been beginning to hate for no other reason than because she felt herself in the wrong, but would not own it.

You have, of course, guessed, that when little Humpty ran away in such a hurry from her dinner, she went to Mrs. Allen to ask if Maria Hayes might take her place in the expedition to the country. I do not know what Mrs. Allen would have done about it herself, but, fortunately, Mr. Thomas and his friend were still at the school; and Mr. Thomas, who in his frequent visits to Elm Court, had pretty well learnt how unkindly Maria Hayes treated Annie Dalton, guessed the little girl's reason for wishing to make the exchange, and put in his word that it might be as she wished.

One thing more you will be glad to hear, and that is, that the gentleman who gave this treat, gave another of the same kind "in haymaking time," the following year, to the *whole* school; and then the children of Elm Court crowned little Humpty with wild roses from the hedges, and, making



her a throne on a haycock, danced round her, singing,—

"Good Queen Humpy sits in the sun,

And we'll all pay her homage one by one."

Then they all came in turn, and kissed her hand; and as there was just then a

call for them to get ready to go home, Dan and Maria made a 'Queen's cushion' for her, and carried her in triumph to their waggon, all her subjects following in procession, as in duty bound.

A. A.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. IX.]

SEPTEMBER, 1868.

[One Penny



He carried me all the way home.'

ONE MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

(Continued from p. 117.)



HAT could have kept the Grants up until now?" I thought, as I crossed the ravine. I know they generally go to bed soon after it is dark, for Tony told me so.

As I tapped at the door, Mrs. Grant lifted the corner of the win-

dow-blind and looked out, but, to my astonishment, she let it fall again with a sharp cry, and I could hear her husband's voice evidently soothing her. Slowly he then unfastened the door and looked out, not as if expecting to see any one, but as he caught sight of me he exclaimed, "Why, Master Arthur! that is never you? What brought you here at this time of night? Are you by yourself?"

"Yes," I answered, "I came by myself; I wanted to bring Tony his boat. I only got it when James came back from town this afternoon, and father and mother are away, and that cross Betsy would not let me come in the day time. Is Tony awake now, Grant? Do look, perhaps he is, and I can see him."

There was a little pause. Grant had taken the boat in his hands and was turning it curiously between his eyes and the candle, while his wife had leant her arms on the table and hid her face in them.

At last Grant spoke in a low tone, and as if with difficulty, but drawing me to his side at the same time. "Did you really get this boat for him with your own money, Master Arthur? You were a kind little gentleman, and God will bless you for it. But, my dear, you cannot comfort Tony any more, he is not here."

"Not here!" I exclaimed in astonishment. "Why, where has he gone to?"

"The Lord Jesus has taken him away, and he is now in heaven with God, while we are mourning for him on earth."

"Is Tony dead?" I faltered (it was

the first time the hand of death had been laid on any one I loved), "I did not know he was going to die. Oh! I wish—I wish, I had seen him again."

"And we wish you could have done so too, Master Arthur; but we had no notion the end was so close upon us. He had been drooping all the week, but we thought it was from the long heat, and hoped every morning would see him stronger, and that I might go to Oaklands and ask if you would please to come and see him. Even this morning," said poor Mrs. Grant, "I did not think he was so much worse. When I had made him all comfortable after breakfast (for he didn't seem to care to get up), he said to me, 'Now, mother, don't you stay from your work for me, I am going to have a nice sleep, and besides, when you or Daddy are with me, the angels don't come. Sometimes when I'm by myself, this room looks full of them.' But he'd said this afore, you know, more than once, so I didn't trouble much. I wasn't out of the room twenty minutes, and when I came in softly, sure enough he was asleep, but the change was on his face, and he didn't wake again, but slept away quite quiet like."

"Do you think he *really* saw the angels?" I asked in an awe-struck tone; it seemed so very wonderful a thing to me.

"Surely he did, Master Arthur; we should have *believed* they were there, you know, even if he had not seen them. But now you must be going home; nurse and the other servants will be terribly frightened if they find out you're missing before you get back."

I had no heart for my defiant "don't care." Suppose there were angels still in the cottage, what would they think of me? My pride, and self-will, and anger seemed to have died out of my heart, and I saw how wrong I had been from beginning to end.

Meanwhile, Grant and his wife were talking together almost in whispers, yet I heard the words, "If the master is angry?"

"He won't be angry," said Grant, firmly, "I've known him long enough to be sure of *that*." Then turning to me, he said,

"Master Arthur, before I take you back, would you like to look again at poor little Tony? At his body, I mean, his soul has gone away to God."

"Yes, please," I said, trying hard not to cry.

"You won't be afraid, dear?" asked the mother.

I shook my head. Then Grant took up the candle, and taking my hot hand in his firm, broad one, he led me gently to the bed in this room, instead, as I expected, into the next, where the children used to sleep. Why should people suppose that children *must* be afraid of death? I believe the fear comes *afterwards*, when the simple child's faith, which our Saviour loved, and which takes His words to mean just what they say, has been clouded and overcast. I only know that in my own case, I felt no terror whatever. But I *did* feel perhaps more completely than an older person might have thought possible, how truly the friend I loved had, as Grant said, "gone away." Tony looked almost smiling in his sleep as he lay on the bed in which his mother's arms had placed him for the last time. His thin hands (worn I used to fancy with grasping his crutch) were folded on his breast, and round his head there was a little wreath of fragrant funeral myrtle. All the lines of pain and weariness were smoothed from his face. Indeed, as I saw him, I could not feel sorry. His look took one's sorrow away. Perhaps the father felt this also, for as he turned to go, he said, "God's will be done! Certainly, if we could ask him, Master Arthur, *he* would not wish to come back."

But now it was really time for me to go home, and Grant went with me; the excitement was over, I was getting very tired. It must have been quite half-past eleven, and I ought to have been asleep hours ago. Grant and I had hardly exchanged a word since we started, yet by the time we reached the end of the first ravine, he noticed my flagging steps and made me jump on his back, and so he carried me all the way home, even up the steepest part, though I begged him not to do it. I remembered he used often to carry Tony in this manner, and as we

went along I was thinking again of those strange words of his. Had the angels really been so near him, then? and did they come to every one when they were dying, or were they always about in the air though I saw them not? I thought next of our Lord's own words, that when Lazarus died, angels had carried him up to heaven, and that made me recollect a speech of Tony's which I had scarcely noticed at the time. It was one morning when we were on the reef together, and had both been silent a little while. Tony was watching the white fleecy clouds that look as if you would sink deliciously into their pillows if you could fall on them. All at once I asked, "Tony, what are you thinking of?" and I remembered his answer, given so simply and steadily, "I was thinking how softly the angels will carry us up to heaven when we die!"

From one memory to another my mind travelled. Snatches of hymns that he had sung, apparently without thinking of it beforehand, as if they were what his heart was full of; the care he took of his Bible (it was always handled slowly and reverently as if it was a precious possession), and then the love he showed to his brothers and sisters who often teased him as children do tease, without meaning to be unkind; I think I had hardly ever heard him say an unkind thing to one of them. Ah, certainly Tony must have been one of those children of whom my mother had talked to me — children who served God.

What put an end to my pondering was a heavy sob from poor Grant. Only one. Quickly I put my arms closer round his neck, and bending forward, kissed him. His reply was an earnest "God bless you, my dear;" but in that hour I made a friend who would have risked his life any day to save mine. Just at the lawn-gate we saw several persons standing, and as we got nearer, we found that the servants had turned out in a body to look for me. Betsy was there sobbing and scolding with all her might, and as Grant put me down, she seized me by the arm and shook me violently, exclaiming, "You naughty, wicked boy, how dare you behave in that way? What do you think your father



and mother will say when they come back to-morrow? they'll whip you well I'll be bound!" And here, I have no doubt, another shake would have followed, had not Grant interfered and rescued me.

"Nay, nay, Betsy," he said, "I can't have that done to-night. Master Arthur knows he has been wrong (how could Grant have guessed it), and it's his father's place to punish him, not your's. Have you only just found out he was missing? It is past twelve o'clock."

This was turning the war into the enemy's own country, Betsy stammered and hesitated. The truth, as I afterwards heard, was, that she had been so well amused in the kitchen, that she never thought of looking after her charges until the clock struck twelve, when, to her dismay, she discovered that I was not in the house, while my open window and the new boat having also vanished, explained where I had gone to. In a few minutes more, Grant had gone home to relieve his wife from her sad watch, and I was taken off to bed for the second time that night, with no worse handling than an angry push now and then from the still indignant Betsy.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE TWO BLACKBERRIES.

YOU would never have taken them for brothers, if they had not been growing close together on the same bramble. One was so beautiful, so big, so black, and the other so small, so hard, so green.

The big, ripe Blackberry was not a little proud of his being so much larger and finer in everything than his younger brother whom he delighted to tease. 'I wish,' said he, one day, 'you had kept on your pink baby's-dress a little longer; I'm sure such a baby as you ought to wear long clothes. Don't you see, you're so very different from me. Oh, you poor little miserable thing! I should be very sorry to be as green and as small as you are.'

'But you know, brother,' said the little Blackberry, 'I really can't help it. I liked the pretty pink petals that I was dressed in very much, and I was very sorry when they fell off. I know too that I grow very slowly, but what can I do? I can't make myself even turn red, much less black.'

He was going on to say more, but was stopped by a loud buzzing close to him. Looking up, he saw quite a cloud of great, rude flies, which frightened him very much.



Arab Courier.

'Oh dear,' said the small Blackberry, 'I suppose they are going to kill me, because I am so small and green; but it really isn't my fault.'

Nothing of the sort; the flies had just been driven away from a peach-tree by the gardener, and the juice had only made them more hungry, so that when they came to the blackberries they stopped.

'Well,' said one of them, 'blackberry-juice is better than nothing; here's a ripe one, let's have some.'

So the big, ripe Blackberry was soon in a woeful plight, for the flies made sad work of him, so that he wished he had been green and small like his brother. And, almost before the flies had done, there came a great brown bird, and pecked at him until he was quite dead, and there was nothing left but the stalk on which he grew.

But what became of the other Blackberry?

Well, in time he became ripe, and was as handsome to look at as his brother had been; only he knew better than to be proud of it, and to tease the younger blackberries. One day there came along some pretty little girls, and one of them gathered him, and put him in her basket. I don't know what happened to him afterwards. I only know that he thought it a great deal better than to be picked to pieces by the vulgar, noisy flies, or pecked to death by the cruel brown bird.

MORAL.—*Pride must have a fall.*

ARAB COURIER.

IT is very strange to look out of a railway-carriage window and see an Arab on a camel crossing the desert. Yet you

may do this as you travel from Alexandria to Suez, as some hundreds of our countrymen do every month in going to India by the overland route.

Our picture shows us an Arab courier crossing the Desert. From the Pyramids in the distance, we may suppose that he is the bearer of a letter from Cairo to some traveller who has gone up the Nile, and for whom a summons has come that he must return to England. The Arab is mounted on a swift dromedary, and is armed with his long spear, which is almost more for show and to make him look prepared for attack, as it would be of little use against even a pistol. His white head-dress shows that he has been among the Europeans, for the wild Arab of the Desert would have a red and yellow silk shawl, with long ends flying, tied round his head; or more likely he would have his striped blanket wrapped over his head. When there is a very blazing sun, the Arabs wrap themselves up altogether in their thick rugs to keep out the heat, and save themselves from sunstroke. The camel is called 'the ship of the Desert,' and it is able to endure the heat and the want of water for many days. Nevertheless many perish in crossing the vast tracts of wilderness, and, as in the picture, their skeletons are to be seen bleaching on the ground, till the sand drifts over them and buries them.

LOVE YOUR LITTLE BROTHER.

By Mrs. Sigourney.

I HAD a little friend,
And every day he crept
In sadness to his brother's tomb,
And laid him down and wept.

And when I ask'd him why
He mourned so long and sore,
He answered through his tears, "Because
I did not love him more.

Sometimes I was not kind,
Or cross, or coldly spake."
And then he turned away, and sobbed
As though his heart would break.

Brothers and sisters are a gift
Of mercy from the skies;
And may I always think of this
When'er they meet my eyes;

Be tender, good, and kind,
And love them in my heart;
Lest I should sigh with bitter grief,
When we are called to part.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE

THE GENTILE MOTHER WHO HAD GREAT FAITH.

St. Matt. xv. 21-28; St. Mark,
vii. 24-30.



WHEN Jesus was on earth,
Satan seems to have
been allowed to vex the
bodies of men, women,
and children, with special
torments. Those
who suffered from these
torments were said to
be *possessed with a devil*,
or *vexed with a devil*;
and it is thought that

Satan was allowed thus to afflict people that the power of Jesus, Who came to *destroy the works of the devil*, might be more clearly shown in casting out these evil spirits.

It is always very grievous to see children suffer pain; and it must have been a heart-rending trouble to the mother whose story we have now to tell, when she saw her *young daughter grievously vexed with a devil*. About the same time a father brought to Jesus his son, who was afflicted in like manner; and, even in the presence of Jesus, *the spirit tare him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming*; and the father said that *oftimes it had cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him*.

This must have been terrible enough with a grown man; but how much more terrible in a fragile young girl!

No wonder then that mothers who had children so suffering, when they heard of Jesus' power to cast out these evil spirits, came to Him from every quarter.

At one time of His ministry He was in the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know it, but He could not be hid,

for the fame of His mighty works had spread through the whole land.

There dwelt in these parts a *woman of Canaan*, or, as St. Mark calls her, a *Greek, a Syro-Phœnician by nation*—showing by these names that she was a Gentile, not a Jew, by birth—and that she had worshipped idols, and not the true God.

This Gentile mother was in great distress, for she had a *young daughter, grievously vexed with a devil*. She had heard of Jesus, and His power over these evil spirits, and so she *came and fell at His feet and besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter*.

But her prayer was met in a strange way. Jesus *answered her not a word*.

Then the disciples seemed to be kinder than their Master, for they spake to Him in her behalf, saying, *Send her away, for she crieth after us*; though it was not the poor mother's sorrow that moved the Apostles so much as their own comfort; they thought she was drawing too much notice on them by her cries, and so they asked Jesus to grant her request.

Jesus answered them, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*.

The woman heard the seemingly rough answer, but she was not daunted. Her faith was strong; a mother's love burned within her, and she fell at Jesus' feet once more, and pleaded yet again, *Lord, help me*. It was her daughter who was suffering, but the mother felt it as keenly as if it was herself; and so she pleads not 'Help my child,' but 'Help me.'

So far Jesus had not spoken to her; but now He does, and His words seem worse than His silence, for He said to her, *It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it unto the dogs*. Jesus spoke thus according to the proud notions of the Jews, as if He had said, 'It is not right to rob the Jews, who are the children of Abraham, of any part of the blessings which I have been sent by my Father to give. There are still many among the Jews who need help and healing; let the children first be filled, and then it will be time to give to you worthless dogs of Gentiles any crumbs that are left.'

For most suppliants such a rebuff would

have been enough; but this Gentile mother's faith and love made her turn even this rebuke into a fresh plea. She said, *Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs*. As if she had answered Him, 'I gladly accept the name and place of dog, for dogs have a share of the meal; not as good a share as the children have, but they are not denied the crumbs that fall on to the floor. I know that the Jews have a right to the first and best blessings, but I humbly beg that I may have some of the crumbs of mercy that fall from their table.'

The Gentile mother's love and trust prevail. Jesus, who had been trying her faith, knowing that it would be strengthened by the trial, now gave her the gracious answer, *O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt: for this saying go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter*.

The cure was instant, though the afflicted maiden was at a distance. The mother believed the word of Jesus; she hastened home, and when she came to her house she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed, taking quiet rest now that her terrible sufferings were at an end.

Now what does this story teach? It should teach mothers that if they have children who are suffering in body, or who are led captive by Satan at his will, so that they fall into wicked ways, they may be saved by their mother's prayers to Jesus. Though He is no longer seen on earth, yet He still surely hears the cry of every one who calls upon Him; and many a reckless, hardened evil-doer is changed and saved by nothing else than God's answer to a mother's prayers.

And there is this other lesson for all, alike parents and children—that if we trust in Jesus, and do not let His seeming neglect of our prayers shake our faith, but persevere in crying unto Him, and in patient waiting for Him, then He will surely in His own time give us a gracious answer and an abundant blessing.



'She came and fell at his feet.



PLAY AND WORK.

OH! how pleasant 'tis to see
Little children full of glee;
Full of frolic, full of mirth,
As the kitten on the hearth.
Harmless as the little lamb
Gaily sporting by its dam.
Oh! how pleasant 'tis to see
Little children full of glee.

But we must not always play,
Frolic days and months away;
Like the bee upon the wing,
We must gather in the spring;
Summer comes and winter too,
We shall find enough to do:
Let us learn as well as play,
Mindful of a future day.

HOW HARRY HUNT CAUGHT A THIEF.



JOHN HUNT lived with his wife and two children in a farm-house a long way from any other houses. The house stood in a garden, and the farm-buildings were at the back of the house. John Hunt was very proud of his garden; he used to send flowers to the show at the village, which was about a mile off, and many a prize he used to get, I can assure you. He used sometimes to allow his little boy Harry to help him to work in the garden. Harry was twelve years old, and was useful both to his father and mother; he could nurse his little sister (a baby just a year old), and if his father and mother had to go away for a few hours, they could leave Harry to take care of baby and the house, and never feel afraid that he would run out to play or get into any sort of mischief. He loved his little sister very much, and was quite proud to be left to take care of her.

One Friday, Mr. Hunt sold a cow for twelve pounds in the market town, and he brought the money home to his wife, for her to take care of till they could hear of another cow which would suit them better than the old one. As part of the money was paper-money, Mrs. Hunt put it between the leaves of an old big Bible which was on a shelf in a cupboard up-stairs; she thought it would be safer there than anywhere else, for the Bible was so old that it was never used.

The next Friday, Mr. Hunt said to his wife, 'Mary, I think I have heard of a cow to suit us, but we can't see it till next Friday; so we won't take our money to market, and then we shall not be tempted to spend it, and, what's more, we can't be robbed of it.'

Just before Mr. and Mrs. Hunt set off to market, they called Harry to them; they were in the yard, getting into the cart, and Mrs. Hunt said, 'Now, Harry, my boy, we shall be away about four hours; be sure and take care of baby and the house, and

remember that besides baby you have ten pounds to take care of, which is in the old Bible up-stairs; so don't let any one come into the house whilst we are away, unless you know them, for there are some tramps about, I hear.'

Harry promised, and his father and mother drove off.

Now all the time when Harry was in the yard talking to his father and mother, there was a dirty woman hiding in the cow-house; she had been looking about to see if she could find eggs or anything else to steal, and when she heard Mr. and Mrs. Hunt come into the yard, she slipped into the cow-house to be out of the way; and so it happened that she heard all about the ten pounds between the leaves of the Bible. She at once made up her mind that she would try and get this money; so she set to work to think how she could best do it.

When Mr. and Mrs. Hunt had driven off, Harry locked the back door and the front door as well, for he felt that the money was a great charge to him; he then fed little Lucy, and put her to bed for her morning's sleep. As soon as he had done this he began to tidy up the kitchen; he had hardly begun when he heard a rap at the front door; he did not open the door, but he put his head out at the window to see who was there.

As soon as the woman saw him, she said, 'Well, my boy, how are you? and how is sister? and is your mother at home?'

'No,' said Harry; 'mother's away, and we are all quite well, thank you.'

The woman then asked him to open the door; 'For,' said she, 'I am your mother's cousin, and I have walked all the way from Dean Hill to see her.'

'I am very sorry, but can't you come another time?' Harry said.

The woman said that she really could not go back without resting awhile; so Harry felt himself obliged to let her in, though he could not help thinking what a dirty woman his mother's cousin from Dean Hill was.

When the woman had been in the house about ten minutes, she said to Harry,

'What a neat garden you have! I should like one of those pretty roses; will you go and fetch it me?'

'I am very sorry,' said Harry, 'but I promised mother not to leave the house for anything.'

The woman found that plan would not answer, so she thought of another, and said, 'Quite right, my boy; always do what your mother tells you. Do you think you can let me go up-stairs to wash my hands and face? I feel dusty, and a good wash will do me good.'

Harry thought she could not possibly know about the paper-money in the Bible, so he took her up-stairs and gave her a towel and soap and water; he then left her, thinking she would look all the better for a good wash.

When he got down-stairs again, he began to think it was a very strange thing that his mother's cousin should be so very dirty and sly-looking, for he had always heard his mother speak very highly of her cousin at Dean Hill. The more he thought about it, the more uneasy he became, and at last he took off his shoes, so that he should not make a noise, and crept gently up-stairs. When he got to the door of the room where the woman was, he listened, and you can imagine how frightened he was when he heard her go to the closet; but he was a brave boy, and he soon made up his mind what to do. He quietly opened the room-door, and saw the woman hunting about in the closet; her back was to Harry, so she did not see him: in a moment he rushed across the room and banged the closet-door to, locking it fast.

'There,' said he, 'there's *one* lock to keep you safe.' He then went out of the room and locked *that* door after him; 'there's *two* locks to keep you safe,' said he; then he locked the door at the foot of the stairs; 'there's *three*,' he said.

All this time the wicked woman was banging at the door, and screaming out that she would murder Harry if he did not let her out. Harry took no notice, but lifted Lucy out of her cot, for the noise woke her, and put her hat and cloak on. He then took baby in his arms and ran up the lane till he came to a field

where he knew a man was working. He told the man all about the bad woman, and begged him to come home and stop with him till his father and mother got back. The man returned with him, and as soon as they got into the house they went up-stairs to find the woman. When they got into the room, the cupboard-door was burst open, the Bible was on the floor, and the woman was nowhere to be seen. Poor little Harry began to cry sadly, and baby began too, when she saw her little brother in such trouble.

The man, however, said, 'Don't fret, my boy; she's not far off, for she surely could not jump from the window, and the room-door was locked when we came in.'

'I do believe she's under the bed,' said Harry; and, sure enough, there she was, shaking with fright.

The man pulled her out, and gave her a good shake; he then tied her hands and feet fast, and when he had done this he laid her on the floor; he then took Harry and baby out of the room and locked the door again.

'There, Harry,' said he, 'let her lie there and shout and cry as hard as she likes, she'll do us no harm, I'll warrant.'

'Won't you go and fetch a policeman?' said Harry.

'Well, my boy, to tell you the truth, I thought you might not like to be left alone again, so I thought I'd wait here with you till your father and mother came home.'

'I'm not afraid,' said Harry.

So the man went to a village about a mile off, and brought back with him two policemen, who walked the woman off to prison at once; they found the money in the bosom of her dress. It was a great relief to Harry to be quit of the thief, for, though he had acted bravely, he had really been terribly frightened.

When his father and mother returned and heard all that Harry and the man had to tell, they were very thankful that their little boy had shown such a brave spirit; and Mr. Hunt told Harry that, as he had taken such good care of the money, he should have the new cow, when it was bought, for his own. Harry was famously

pleased; he asked if he might go and help to choose the cow, and his father said he should do so.

The next Friday they both went to the fair, and bought a little red cow, and Harry had all the money that the milk and butter was sold for, and his father put it into the Post-office Bank for him; so that by the time he was a man he would have a good many pounds to help him to start in a small farm of his own.

GOD THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.

'TWAS God who made the elephant,
'Twas God who made the fly;
'Twas God who spread the deep blue sea,
And hung the stars on high.

'Twas He who made the tiny worm,
The whale so great and strong;
He gave the little bird his wings,
And tuned his voice for song.

He made the camel and the bear,
The glow-worm and the bee;
The ripple on the mountain brook,
The wave upon the sea.

He made the lion and the horse,
The meek and patient ass;
The oak that in the forest springs,
Each tiny blade of grass.

He made the leopard and the lamb,
The wild and graceful fawn;
The squirrel in the dusky wood,
The blackbird on the lawn.

The swan that glides upon the lake,
The tortoise and the snail;
The pine-tree on the Alpine rock,
The lily in the vale.

He made this earth so wide and fair,
And all who dwell thereon;
His mercy watcheth over all,
His love forgetteth none.

He knows His creatures every one,
In palace or in cot;
His eye can see the wide world o'er,
And nothing is forgot.

Then, since His great and gracious love
To all who seek is given,
Let little children come to Him,
And He will guide to heaven.

Pearlree.

J. E. J.

TREE FOUNTAINS.

ONE of the most interesting things to be seen in the Royal Gardens at Kew, is 'The Pitcher Plant.' This plant grows wild, and flourishes in South Asia, on stony soils. It is a climber; taking hold of the rocks with its tendrils, and covering their nakedness with its beautiful green foliage. Its chief feature, however, is its way of holding water—a beautiful provision of Nature—as the plant could not live without water for an hour. At the end of each leaf there hangs a little jug or pitcher, having a lid to it, and always full of pure cold water, which keeps the plant fresh and green. How these little vessels are kept supplied with water, is not known; for the soil on which the plant grows is dry and hot, and there is little rain and no dew.

Another curiosity of vegetation is 'The Traveller's Tree,' which grows in Madagascar and South Africa. It is a tree of the plantain kind, with large upright leaves growing in a fan-shaped cluster. The tree is commonly about thirty feet high, and its leaves are six feet long and one broad.

It is called the 'Traveller's Tree' because it is of great use to travellers. Each of its leaves contains a groove which opens into a hollow space at the base, and this space, even in very dry seasons, is always full of water. A deep prick into the pulpy stalk is sufficient to tap the tree, and each leaf yields about a quart. A full-grown tree has about twenty-four of these leaves, so that a single tree can supply as much as six gallons of water, that is, about as much as a man can carry in a skin. After the tree has been pierced, the place grows up, and becomes full of water again in a week.

How wise and wonderful are the works of God! The pitcher-plant and the traveller's tree cannot live without water, and He supplies it in a wondrous way, and if He so cares for the plants, will He not much more care for us? The Bible says, that 'no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. Bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure.'



The Traveller's Tree.

THE STORMY DAY.

WISH not, dear child, the rain gone by,
 Repine not at the clouded sky ;
 It is not right so much to grieve
 Because your out-door sports you leave ;
 But think of Him who sends the rain,
 And Who can make it fine again,
 And Who provides your home so warm,
 To shield you from the wintry storm.

Then as we watch the storm pass by,
 Instead of fretting, let us try
 If we from it cannot discern
 Some lessons that we ought to learn,
 And feel we must as grateful be
 In sorrow, as prosperity—
 And trust the hand that sends the shower
 To grant us soon the sunshine hour.

There's not one drop of sparkling rain
 That sinks beneath the earth in vain ;
 Each snowflake in its silent fall,
 Drops like a lesson for us all ;
 The sharp cold wind that boisterous blows,
 Whispers with gentle voice to those
 Who good in all things, strive to see,
 And meekly bear adversity.

The garden that you mourn to-day,
 Because you cannot in it play,
 Would never shine so bright with flowers,
 If God sent not His gracious showers ;
 So, our hard hearts would never grow
 Tender and soft to other's woe,
 If we had never felt a grief,
 And learnt the way to give relief.

The earth seems now so sad and white,
 Buried with snowflakes soft and light ;
 But yet that snow protects the roots,
 And keeps them safe for summer fruits.
 Thus, each small grief and trifling care,
 Which now we feel so hard to bear,
 Will turn to our advantage great,
 If we with faith and patience wait.

The moaning wind we shrink to hear,
 (It sounds so mournful to our ear,)
 May drive some noxious vapour by,
 And save us all from sickness nigh.
 So, the sharp trials we endure,
 Will work those very sorrows' cure :
 If we will meek and quiet be,
 Beneath our Maker's wise decree.

And so, my child, remember still,
 In darkest days of gloom and ill,

There's yet some work that must be done,
 Some duty— ere the morrow's sun
 Shall lead us forth to joy again,
 And we forget the evening's rain ;
 Some lesson from each clouded day,
 To guide us on a brighter way.

We cannot feel one grief or pain,
 Which may not turn to greater gain ;
 There never is a trial given
 Which may not prove a step to heaven ;
 And even a child, like you, can see
 How what *were* sorrows, joys *may* be ;
 So this dull day shall well be spent,
 In learning lessons of content.

S. C.

OBEYING AT ONCE.

THE following story is told in the Berlin newspapers. It reminds us of the promise given in the fifth Commandment, 'Honour thy father and thy mother, that *thy days may be long in the land.*'

A pointsman was at the junction of two lines of railway near Prague ; his lever was in his hand, for a train was just coming. The engine was within a few seconds of reaching the embankment, when the man, on turning his head, saw his little boy playing on the rails of the line the train had to pass over.

To leave his own post would be a neglect of duty, and would endanger the lives of perhaps a hundred passengers, so like a true hero, he stood to his lever, shouting to his child, "Lie down at once." The train passed along on its way safely, and the poor father rushed forward expecting to take up an injured, most likely a fearfully mangled and lifeless body, but great was his joy on finding that the boy had *at once* obeyed the order ; he had lain down between the rails, and the whole train had passed over him without injury.

If the boy had not at once done as he was told, he must have been killed. Remember this story when tempted to think *presently* will do to obey.

When the King of Prussia heard of the man's courage, he sent for him and gave him a medal for his courage. The King of Heaven has rewards beyond all price for 'them that love Him and keep His commandments.'

THE TWO BOYS AND THE TWO WOLVES.



AHUNGARIAN merchant once related the following story:—"In my home the country is very mountainous, and near my house the inhabitants are very poor. In a village near there lived a poor widow; she was very ill and in want of firewood, so she sent her two children out into the forest with a barrow; one of these boys was twelve, the other eight years old. It was winter, and the ground

was deeply covered with snow.

"As they were on the way with their barrow, they came to a church. 'Janko,' said the younger, 'I feel very strange. It seems to me as if some misfortune would happen to us to-day. Let us go into the church before we go any further.'

"His brother said, 'I am quite willing.'

"So they left their barrow at the church door, went in, knelt down, and prayed to the Lord Jesus.

"Then they went on farther, feeling cheerful and of good courage, although they often fell down in the snow. They found plenty of dry wood, and while they were busy gathering it up and binding it fast upon the barrow, they saw two wolves in the distance running straight upon them. What could the poor children do now? To run away from the wolves was perfectly impossible. There was not a tree near, into which they could have climbed, for round about them there was only low brushwood. Even if there had been a tree ever so high, it would not have helped them, for the wolves would have kept watch below, and they must have starved to death. What did they do then in their distress? The eldest, a brave, determined boy, made the little one lie down on the ground, then he covered him with the barrow, threw as much wood as he could upon it, and called to him, 'Do not move; I am not afraid.'

"Ah! Janko,' said the younger one crying, 'if we should perish our mother will die of grief.'

"The little fellow remained under the barrow and the dry wood; the elder stood up before him holding his axe. When one wolf, which had run the fastest, came up, he dealt him such a blow on the neck, that he fell to the ground dead. At this moment the other wolf seized him by the arm and threw him to the ground. In terrible pain and fear he seized the monster with both hands by the throat, and held his open jaws away from him, without screaming, however, for he did not wish his brother to come out and show himself to the wolf, and so risk his life. But a terrible fear came over the younger boy in his hiding-place. He threw off from him the barrow and the wood, seized the axe which had fallen on the ground, and smote the wolf on his back several times with all his might. The beast now turned upon his new enemy, whom he would, undoubtedly, have torn to pieces, had not the other boy sprung up, quick as lightning, and struck the wolf in the head with his axe, so that he at once fell down dead. Thus the two boys, by God's help, overcame two ravenous beasts without receiving themselves any dangerous wounds.

"They now gazed at each other with amazement; they then looked at the beasts who, with open jaws, lay dead upon their backs, and were astonished at their strong teeth and huge mouths. Then they knelt down and thanked God for their wonderful preservation, and then returned home rejoicing, with the wood and the carcases of the wolves upon their barrow."

J. F. C.

'CHATTERBOX,' price One Halfpenny Weekly
Threepence in Monthly Parts.

The *Times* says—"Chatterbox" is one of the best Children's Books we have seen."

The *Standard* says—"There is not a Magazine in the bundle to bear a moment's comparison with "Chatterbox."

'CHERRY RIPE,' a beautiful Coloured Picture,
will be given with 'CHATTERBOX,' Part I.
for January, 1869.



'He struck the wolf with his axe.'

The Volume of the "PRIZE" for 1868 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'A PUZZLE FOR GRANNY,' will be given with the January number of the 'Children's Prize for 1869.'

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. X.]

OCTOBER, 1868.

[One Penny.



Fawn.



FAWN.

OW charming a fawn is! The young of various of the deer tribe are called 'fawns,' while those of the kid-deer, Canadian deer, moose, &c., are called 'calves' from their size and limbs, which are not so elegant and graceful. In French, however, they are all *faons*, from which our English word is derived. The fawn and its dam are very affectionate, and exchange a thousand little caresses, while the fawn follows its mother wherever she goes. From this following we use the word 'fawning' of any one who is always paying court to some one greater than himself—seeking to gain his notice by following his steps and offering him flattery.

The fawn is so sensitive of its mother's caresses, that you can induce a *new-born* one, should you discover it in its lair, to follow you by caressing it on the back.

At times, however, obedience has to be enforced when fawns grow big and self-willed, and then the dam strikes them with the foreleg, and also bites them. If the fawn is to lie still, and moves, the doe strikes it with its foot. This becomes afterwards a signal to lie down close and hide from an enemy. Fawns are soon tamed, but become savage when full-grown as males, and mischievous and intrusive when female.

CONTENTMENT.

'Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.'

The Task.

A CHURCH-YARD is not to me a melancholy place, but quite the contrary, for it always suggests to my mind that glorious and happy day when our Lord shall come, and when the trump of the archangel shall be heard by the dead, and they shall rise to meet Him in the air; besides this, it teaches me not to value too highly the things of this world, but to remember what our Lord said, that a *man's life consisteth not in the abund-*

ance of the things which he possesseth,' for it will matter little to me when Christ comes whether I am rich or poor, if only I be 'rich in faith, an heir of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him.'

These thoughts ran through my mind as I sat on a stone in the churchyard of Roston. It was a lovely evening in the month of June, the church service was over and the congregation were dispersing. Just then I noticed an old man whom I had seen in church, led by a young girl to a grave which had been lately made; I saw them weep, but, as the old man brushed away his tears, he raised his hands towards heaven, and a smile played around his mouth. Drawing near to them I said, 'My friends, you grieve, I suppose, for some dear relation?'

'Yes, indeed,' the old man answered; 'my dear wife is gone, and blind as I am she was everything to me, yet I do not murmur. My daughter here is very good to me, and I have two sons, good, obedient lads; we have enough to live on, and why should I be downcast; this is only a journey, and I hope to meet my dear wife when I arrive at the end of it, and we shall then be together with the Lord.'

As he spoke his face brightened, and I do not think I ever saw a countenance that expressed more happiness than did that of this poor blind man.

'You appear to be quite blind,' I said; 'that must be a great trial to you.'

'Well,' replied he, 'I never was so happy in my life as during the last two years, when I have been totally blind. I don't indeed see the beauties of nature, which I always enjoyed so much, but this has proved a blessing to me, for I think now about the land that is very far off, and the "rose of Sharon" which grows there, and of "the pure river of the water of life, which proceeds out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb," and of the golden city where the "sun of righteousness" is always shining.'

Having parted from this happy old man, I walked slowly home, saying to myself, surely 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.' 'To be content is to be

happy,' said one of England's greatest teachers.

I know two people whose characters are a striking illustration of what I say, Mr. L. and Mrs. S. Mr. L. lives in a house fit for a nobleman, surrounded by well-kept lawns and beautiful woods, while a sparkling river runs through his grounds. He has five lovely children, and one of the best of wives. It is not long ago since I met him on the road. 'How do you do, Mr. L.?' I said. 'Pretty well, thank you,' was the reply, 'except for the trouble that fellow Jim Mullins is giving me. I want his patch of ground that I may add it to my lawn, and throw down that ugly little house of his, which is a perfect eye-sore to me, for it is the first thing to be seen from the library window; I have offered him another place much better than it, but nothing will persuade the old fellow to leave it, because indeed his father had it before him, and he has reared all his children there.'

At this moment we were overtaken by another friend, and as they hurried off in another direction, I mused in silence over the misery of a discontented mind.

Mrs. S. is a totally different character; she has one of the most placid countenances I ever saw, and it is a true sign of the peaceful mind that dwells within. She has the sole management of a farm, and is a widow with six daughters, and one son, a child of ten years old; not long since the season was very wet and she lost nearly all her hay, and soon after two of her fine milch-cows died, which was a serious loss to her, as the dairy was the chief support of the family. Neighbours in the country are often much interested in each other's welfare, and Mrs. H. was a kind woman, so she called to see Mrs. S. to condole with her on her grievances. 'I am very sorry,' she began, 'to hear of your misfortunes, Mrs. S.'

'What do you mean?' asked the lady of the farm.

'Why, to be sure, the loss of your hay and your cows.'

'Well, yes, indeed, they are a serious loss to me, and it will take some time to be as snug again; but I have many bless-

ings left, my children are in good health, and are all willing to assist me, God is good and has hitherto helped me, and I trust He will now.'

'It is a wonder to me how easy some people take things,' said Mrs. H.; 'such calamities would quite upset me; besides, you have no one to look after the farm but yourself. I do think you must find it too much for you, if you would but say so.'

'I don't deny but that I am often tired enough,' replied Mrs. S., 'but I like to make the best of things; that good man, the Rev. Philip Henry, used to say that, "as we never can bring up our condition to our mind, so it is best for us to bring our minds down to our condition;" and you know the Apostle Paul went through great and sore troubles, yet he could say that "*he had learned in whatsoever state he was therewith to be content.*" And the grace of God if we seek for it, can teach us to say the same.'

LITTLE THINGS.

LITTLE eyes, little eyes,
Twinkling, star-like, on the sea
Of all our troubles, all our sadness,
Heaven-born lights are ye.

Little feet, little feet,
Falling on our humble floor,
Bringing faith, and hope, and gladness,
Where doubt was before.

Little hands, little hands,
Softly, meekly, clasped in prayer;
Pleading at the gates of heaven
For the loved ones there.

Little heart, little heart,
Beating out the golden hours,
Coining all that life hath given
Into buds and flowers.

Little thoughts, little thoughts,
Working in that little brain;
Restless, endless thoughts a-sowing;
Seeds for joy or pain.

How I love ye! how I love ye!
Tongue can never tell how much!
Life is doubly worth the knowing,
When we live for such.

MATTHIAS BARR.



AN AFRICAN MAIL.

THIS gentleman in a black skin who is jogging along so easily, without shoes or stockings, though he does not look like one, is a postman; and he carries letters too—letters to Englishmen in Africa from friends in England; but perhaps in no part of the world except Africa does a postman wear a necklace.

His letters are all in that tin box which he bears upon his head, and balances in that curious-looking thing between a tray and a basket. As he has a long way to go he carries a calabash of water, some fruit, and a country-looking cloth.

But besides the letters of Europeans which the 'mail' before us contains, there

are also, no doubt, in it other letters—letters of symbol, such as one African chief sends to another. Such a letter is exactly copied in the picture. It was sent in the year 1853, from one black king to another. This letter consisted of eight cowries, or shells, four kernels of fruit, and a seed-pod, all threaded upon a short stick. Each of these things had a meaning, which both sender and receiver understood, but which no Englishman could make out. The four sets of cowries meant the four corners of the earth; the kernels (used in playing an African game), meant that both kings in future would be as friendly as if they were at play together.



The seed-pods in the middle, an emblem of plenty, served as a full stop : so that the letter could be read either way, with the same meaning. If it were turned into English it would read somewhat as follows :—

'You and I are friends—our lives are as straight as this letter. There are four corners to the earth, and wherever you and I may be, we will be companions. When children play *wari* (kernels), they never hurt each other. We will be like children and live in peace all our lives. May our lot be one of plenty. Here I stop. I have said my say. Now you say the same. That is all.'

'YOU CAN IF YOU TRY.'



H, dear!' exclaimed Jessie Wright, as she came in from play, her cheeks in a glow, and her eyes all a sparkle from the hearty exercise. 'Oh, dear! I am so thirsty. Jane! mother!' but there was no answer.

Jessie had a trick of saying, 'Oh, dear!' and it fell from her lips more than once when she found the pail empty, her mother asleep, and Jane busy in the cellar. It made her thirstier than ever to see the cool water sparkling so provokingly at the bottom of the well. It was very trying to the patience of nine years old.

There was no help for her. *I must* was stronger than *I can't*; so Jessie set the bucket off, and it fairly flew down the well, as though it wished to help her all it could.

But the getting it up again was no easy matter. Jessie tugged and tugged at the windlass, and by a great effort succeeded in getting the rope over twice, then her strength was exhausted.

What should she do? Let all that beautiful cool water down into the well again? It was not to be thought of! So she held on tight with her right hand, and, reaching for the rope with her left, gave it two or three good jerks that almost pulled her off her feet.

After resting awhile to get breath, she went to work again, and the bucket was so much lighter that it soon reached the top, and Jessie swung it on to the shelf.

How sweet and delicious that water was! It had never tasted half as good, although she had been drinking from the same well ever since she could remember. After refreshing herself, she turned, to find her mother watching her from the doorway and Jane just coming up from the cellar.

'Indeed, Miss Jessie,' said the latter, 'indeed, you are a brave one! There's not many like you, I'll be bound! It's

no light work pulling up the bucket, and your arms are not thicker than broom-sticks !'

'I was ready to help you if you failed,' said Mrs. Wright, and she kissed her darling. 'I wished you to see what you could do if you tried.'

Another day, when Jessie was very peevish—for she was not the best-natured girl in the world—her mother received a letter, telling her of the illness of a dear brother, and urging her to come and see him before he died.

Mrs. Wright began at once to get ready for leaving home. Jessie thought surely her mother would not go without taking her ; she always had done so before ; but there was not a word said about it this time.

'I wish you to be very good, Jessie, and help Jane all you can. Set the table neatly, and show your father what a useful girl you can be.'

'Oh mother! don't leave me! I can't stay, I can't stay without you!' And she cried as though her heart would break.

'Don't be silly, child. I couldn't think of taking you where there is sickness.'

'I'll be very good ; I won't be a bit of trouble.'

'Hush! you are too old a girl to act so. Remember the bucket of water you managed to draw up for yourself. I expect you to be good and useful while I am gone ; and you can, if you will only try.'

After her mother had really gone, Jessie made up her mind to do her duty. She took pride in doing everything that would please her father, and amused him very much by the airs she put on when she took the head of the table, and poured out his tea and coffee. Jane had to help her a little at first, but it soon came quite easy, and her father said the tea and coffee were 'extra sweet,' b-cause she looked in the cup. Jessie didn't think it was possible for her to do so many things with so little teaching. She used to think that little folk were meant to be idle ; and that when they got to be as old as Jane or her father, they would be wise, and know how to do everything without any training.

Is there any little girl like Jessie

Wright? If there be any one who shrinks from doing what she ought because she happens to think *she can't*, let her try what she can do, and she will astonish herself.

A CHILD'S INVITATION TO A BIRD.

O LITTLE bird, come live with me,
For you can sing as merrily
As e'er you did on yonder bough ;
So little bird come with me now.

Through woods and grassy fields we'll go,
Where buttercups and cowslips grow ;
And while I pluck the blossoms gay,
I'll listen to your cheerful lay.

And you can skim from tree to tree,
Playing at hide-and-seek with me ;
And as I watch you upward fly,
I'll think of those beyond the sky.

And listening to your carolling,
I'll think how holy angels sing
With those who once were by my side,
But now in heaven are glorified.

And when each pleasant day declines,
And the bright sun no longer shines,
To fields and flowers we'll bid good-bye,
And then together homeward hie.

And when I lay me on my bed,
You'll find a perch above my head ;
And early wake me with your strain,
To wander forth with you again.

W. H.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

THE MOTHER AT NAIN.

St. Luke, vii. 11-16.



IF we were asked, When would the love of a mother be shown in its greatest strength? we might answer, When a mother, who was a widow, had one only child ; her whole heart would be bound up in the life and happiness of that child.

And how terrible would be such a mother's sorrow if that one child were to die! How could she bear to lay him in the grave?

We read a story in the Gospels of a mother who was overwhelmed in such sorrow, and was called out of it by the voice of Jesus, and her sorrow was turned into joy.

One day as Jesus, and *many of His disciples and much people*, came nigh to the gates of the city of Nain, they met a funeral passing forth, for the Jews always buried their dead outside the walls of their towns.

We are not told whether the dead man had been rich or poor; but we are told that *much people of the city* were with the chief mourner. They were there either to show their respect for the dead man, or else they were there to show that they felt sorry for his mother, now left alone in the world. For this was one of those cases in which a mother's love had been most fully called forth. *She was a widow*, and the dead man was *the only son of his mother*.

When Jesus saw this funeral He knew the depth of the mother's grief, and *He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.*

But He did far more than merely bid her not weep for her sorrow. It is easy if we are in no trouble ourselves to tell others not to grieve or cry over their woes. Jesus took away the cause of her weeping; He turned her root of bitterness into a flower of joy. *He came and touched the bier*, and the bearers *stood still*; Jesus said, *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.* And in an instant *he that was dead sat up and began to speak.*

We are not told what he said; but we may well suppose that his lips first poured forth words of praise to God, and then words of love to his amazed and awe-struck mother, and words of adoring thanks to Jesus, whose voice had called back his soul from the unseen world.

Those who carried the bier now rested it on the ground, and the young man rose from it; and Jesus, taking him by the hand, *delivered him to his mother.* What a priceless gift! How would the mother, when she got over the shock of her great joy, clasp her son to her breast and cry, 'Can it be that my son, who

was dead, is really alive again? Oh, yes! I feel the warm embrace of those arms that I laid cold and powerless on his breast; I see the beaming of the eyes that I had closed; I hear again the tongue that was silent in death. It is my son, —my only son.'

What a happy meeting that was! But mother and son did not meet to part no more. The time came when either the son followed his mother to the grave, or the widow a second time went forth in sorrow after those who bore her dead son to his grave; and then no Jesus met her and gave her son to her arms again.

But what Jesus did for one weeping mother at the gates of Nain, the day of the general resurrection will do for mothers and mourners without number. Those who have loved Jesus on earth will then meet again those they have loved on earth, and in heaven will part no more.

Wherefore let all mothers who weep for their children dead, let all who follow to the grave those they love, comfort their hearts with the thought of the rising again.

Jews, as they went to the grave, used to pluck every one a handful of grass, to show that their brother was only cropped off for a time, and would again spring up in due season.

Christians, in early times, used to distribute rosemary to the company at funerals, because it flourishes the more for being cut, and if even a sprig of it be set in the ground it will grow; and so it served to remind those who were putting the dead body of their friend in the earth that that body should one day rise again.

And it is the same thought which makes it common in England to cast flowers into the grave at funerals, because flowers remind us of the rising to life again which there shall be when the winter of earth is over and the spring-time of the Resurrection is come.

Let us all, then, in days of happiness and peace, seek to have a sure trust in the power of Jesus to raise the dead, and then we shall not sorrow as those without hope, when we have to follow our beloved ones to their last resting-place on earth.



'Is he really alive again



THE PRECIOUS GIFT.

ONCE upon a time there lived a great king; he was rich, and wise, and

powerful, and his people thought that he must be the happiest man in the world. They all took off their hats when they

spoke of him, and were proud of being the subjects of a king who was so much greater, and wiser, and richer than other kings. Now one day this king sent for his only son: he was just the sort of son you would expect such a king to have, so I will not stop to tell you what he was like; you can fancy it for yourselves. Well, the prince came, and knelt down and kissed his father's hand, and then stood up and waited to hear what he had to say. But the king made him sit down by him on his throne, and sent all the attendants away, so that he might talk to the prince without anybody hearing him. He said, "My son, you know that when I die you will be king over this great country."

And the prince bowed his head and answered, "that he hoped it would be a long, long while before he was obliged to rule."

And the king smiled and answered, "You are happier as you are; kings are not always happy: but though you are in no hurry to take my crown and put it on your own head, we must look forward to the time when the change will surely come. So I have sent for you to-day to tell you of something. When I die you will find all the kingdom in good order; the people will be glad to obey you; the treasure-chamber will be full of money and jewels; you will live in the most magnificent palace in the world; you will have everything I can give you. But there is something I cannot give—something, without which all this honour, and glory, and riches, will be worse than nothing, and instead of being happy you may envy the beggar at your gate."

The prince listened and wondered. "And what is this—this precious thing, my father? and where shall I find it?"

But the king replied, "I cannot tell you."

And the prince wondered more than ever; but he did not like to ask questions, so he sat waiting to hear what his father would say next. For a long while he said nothing, he was so busy with his own thoughts: perhaps he, too, was wondering—wondering whether his son would ever find the precious gift. At last he said,—

"You shall go out into the world and

travel. When you are a king you will be obliged to stay at home, so now is the time for you to see all that is to be seen; perhaps it may be, that when you come again you will bring the precious gift with you."

So the prince set off on his travels, and was wise enough to go quite by himself, for he thought that if he took a large train of servants and horses, everybody would know that he was a prince, and that he should not see nearly so much of the world as if he travelled alone. He went to a great many places, and saw a great many things; and as no one knew he was a prince, he learnt a great deal more about men and women than he had known where everybody put on their 'company-manners' before him, because he was a prince. But all this time he never forgot what his father had told him, and wondered where he should find the precious gift, without which he could not be a happy man. Sometimes he thought that he could be happy even if he never had it, but he knew the king always said what was true; so, if he forgot the gift for a time, he soon remembered it again, and looked for it wherever he went. Once he thought he had found out what it was. He heard some merchants talking about a diamond that had been dug out of the mines, the largest and most beautiful diamond in the world, and one merchant said to another, "Oh, what a happy man to have such a precious stone! I should be happier than a king if it were mine." And the other merchant agreed with him, and they went on talking about the diamond till the prince thought that this must be the precious gift. So he set off to the place where the diamond was kept. He had to travel a long way, but still he always heard people talking of the beautiful gem, and envying the man who owned it. At last he came to the town where it was, and asked if he could see it. But the people told him that it was kept locked up in three iron chests, each bigger than the other, and the iron chests were kept in an iron room, and the owner always carried the key round his neck. This made the prince more anxious than ever

about the diamond, and he thought he would go the next day and tell the owner that he was a prince who had come from a foreign country to see his treasure, and then he would be sure to see it. But that very evening as he stood by the banks of the river, watching the great ships at anchor, and the merry little boats skimming about over the water, and all the people who had come out to enjoy the cool breeze, he saw a man walking by himself. He was not an old man, but his face was wrinkled and his hair grey, and he walked with a stoop, and always kept one hand inside his breast. As he passed, the people turned to look at him, and the prince heard a child ask its mother who he was.

"That is the owner of the great diamond," she replied.

Then the child opened its eyes wide, for it had heard a great deal about the diamond, and looked at the man as he passed. But the man never raised his eyes, but went on his solitary walk.

And the child wondered and said, "He looks very sad! I thought he must be so happy to have the diamond!"

"It only makes him miserable," said the mother. "He is afraid that every one wishes to rob him; he will not let his dearest friend come into his house, or walk with him; he would be happier if the diamond were at the bottom of the sea; far happier if he had never had it."

And then the mother took up the child in her arms and carried him down to the river, and let him paddle his little feet in the cool water, and splash it over her in his play. And the sound of their happy laughter followed the solitary man as he wandered on, with his concealed hand ever grasping the key of the iron room that held his treasure.

(To be continued.)

MECCA AND ITS PILGRIMS.

The two figures represent two Arabs—a Wahabee and an official of Mecca.

Mecca is an Arabian city, near the eastern shore of the Red Sea, where the false prophet Mahomet was born just 1300 years ago. It is the 'holy place' of the

Mussulman religion. Every Mahometan turns towards Mecca when he prays, and his heart's desire is to go there on a pilgrimage before he dies.

During what is called 'the pilgrim month,' Mecca is thronged with crowds of pilgrims, who come from east, west, north, and south. Every Mussulman country sends a caravan of pilgrims. The train of camels and riders which forms a caravan is often half a mile long. They come from Tripoli, Morocco, and Egypt—from Turkey, Syria, and Persia. Single pilgrims come from India, and even from the regions of Central Africa—a long and painful journey through thousands of miles of desert.

When the pilgrims come in sight of the domes of Mecca they change their usual dress and put on the 'Ihram' or pilgrims' garb, which they must wear during their stay. On reaching Mecca each pilgrim is bound to go at once to the Caaba, or Holy Stone, which is believed to have fallen from Paradise. This the pilgrim has to go round seven times, kissing it each time.

This done, he is allowed to eat if he is hungry, but he must always drink at the well Zem-Zem, which true Mahometans believe to be the very well which Hagar saw in the wilderness (Gen. xxi. 19) from which she gave water to her son Ishmael, the great forefather of the Arabs.

There are many other ceremonies to be observed by the pilgrims. They have to run seven times through a street called Al Maasa, to pass a day in prayer on the hill Arafat, and to go before sunrise to the valley of Mena, and there cast twenty-one stones. Then there are purifyings to undergo and hundreds of prayers to be said, so that the pilgrims must have no idle time of it while at Mecca.

A sect of Arabs called the Wahabees some years ago professed to reform these superstitious practices, but no doubt it was the love of power rather than true zeal which moved them. The Wahabees got possession of Mecca, and kept all pilgrims out of it by the sword for seven years. They would, most likely, have conquered Arabia for themselves, if they



Arabs.

had not been defeated in battle by the Egyptian army.

No Christian person is allowed to enter Mecca to witness any of the ceremonies.

Two or three European travellers, however, by pretending to be Mahometans, have got in at the risk of their lives and have told us what they have seen.



A CHINESE FANCY.

THE more we hear about the people of China, the more singular do their ways appear to us. No one ever penetrates into a Chinese city without finding out something or other about the people which had not been noticed before. Here, for instance, in this picture, is an illustration of one of their odd notions.

An English traveller not long ago, when in the city of Peking, saw the carriage of a rich old Chinaman stop at a bird-shop. The servant was ordered to go into the shop and fetch out some cages of sparrows. When this was done the cage doors were opened, and the birds let loose. Cage after cage was brought out at the gentleman's orders, and when all the birds had been let go, there were no less than 260 sparrows to be paid for.

Now this act was not done out of kindness to the birds, but the old gentleman believed that for every bird he set free he was adding one day to his life. Probably he did not feel well that day, and wished to make sure of living a little longer. If there had been twice the number of birds he would have purchased them all.

The religion of the Chinese is bound up with their daily life. If it was only a true one and thus practised, how good it would be! Unfortunately it is not so. With *us*, however, the true light shines; and if we could imitate the Chinese in this one particular, and practise the precepts of the Bible in *our* daily life, how much better we should be—all of us—than we are.

SAND-PAPER TONGUE.

WHEN I was a boy,' says one, 'I and a number of my playmates had rambled through the woods till, quite forgetting the fading light, we found ourselves far from home; indeed, we had lost our way. It did so happen that we were nearer home than we thought; but how to get to it was the question. By the edge of the field we saw a man coming along, and we ran to ask him to tell us. Whether he was in trouble or no I don't know, but he gave us some very sharp answers. Just then there came along another man, a near neighbour, with a merry smile on his face. 'Jim,' said he, 'a man's tongue is like that of a cat. It is either a piece of velvet or a piece of paper—just as he likes to use it; and I declare you always use your tongue

like sand-paper. Try the velvet, man; try the velvet principle.'

Children, have you never seen a boy or girl with a sand-paper tongue? You can tell sand-paper from any other even if you shut your eyes. By rubbing your hand over it you will find it to be very rough.

That is just what we mean by a sand-paper tongue—one that utters rough words which hurt the poor heart, just as the flesh is hurt by sand-paper when it is rubbed by it. Every time you speak a rough word to your mother, you are scraping her heart with a sand-paper tongue. And recollect that a sand-paper tongue will make the heart bleed just as quick as a piece of sand-paper will bring the blood by rubbing the flesh with it. Have any of you, children, made your parents' hearts bleed by rough words?

It is possible to tell sand-paper without touching it. If you hear anybody scraping it on the wall, or rubbing it on the table, you can always tell it by the sound. When it sounds very harshly you know it is sand-paper. It is just so with these sand-paper tongues—you can always tell them by their sound.

'What did you do that for, you good-for-nothing little thing?' said Mary Rough to her little sister Hattie, when she tumbled and broke off one of the feet of Mary's doll. I'm a great mind to slap you well; you're always breaking something of mine.'

Children, can't you tell what kind of tongue it was that spoke so harshly to little Hattie? Can't you tell a cracked bell when you hear it? Well, surely you can tell as easily what kind of tongue Mary Rough had, by the sound it sent to her poor little sister's ears.

If you will take a piece of sand-paper and rub it for some time on a plank, it will become less and less rough, until finally it will hardly be rough at all. But the more a sand-paper tongue is used the rougher and rougher it gets. Well, then, boys and girls, the best way is to 'try the velvet principle,' that is, use soft words, speak kindly to each other. Strive by all means not to carry a sand-paper tongue in your mouth, when a velvet one would be so much more useful and becoming.

ONE MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

(Concluded from page 132.)



ND what *did* mother say when she heard the whole story next morning? First of all from Betsy, and then in a shamefaced and repentant fashion, from myself.

"Oh, my boy," she said, "how could you do so when I trusted you?"

It was not a very long speech, but I had been dreading it ever since I awoke that day, more than I should have minded any possible punishment. I had nothing to say for myself now, only to beg her to forgive me and trust me again, and "punish me any way you like, please, mother, I added, for indeed I am, sorry!" Then she kissed me and forgave me, and still I lingered with her, partly because I was so very, very glad to have her back again, partly because I was still waiting to know what my penance was to be.

My mother went on talking: "Have you asked God to forgive you, Arthur, for the sake of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ?"

"Yes," I said.

"That is right. Have you asked Betsy to forgive you? (I could not say *yes* to this question.) Betsy's reason for not allowing you to go to the beach in the afternoon, was her wish that you should not be pained by hearing of the death of your little friend, while neither your father nor I were at home to comfort you. You gave Betsy a great deal of trouble, Arthur, and you have made me very angry with her this morning."

"I will go and ask her pardon this minute," I said, and ran off to the nursery where poor Betsy was sitting in tears. She did not receive my apology very graciously, but no wonder, it was by no means the first occasion on which my misdoings had brought her into trouble with her

mistress, and my apology could not undo the pain she had received. Yet I felt more happy myself, because I had done what was right.

I entered my mother's room more slowly this time, she was at work and received me with a kind word or two, but she said nothing about the penance I was to suffer. At last I could wait no longer, so I began :

"Mother, you have not told me what punishment I am to have?"

"I have been thinking over the matter, Arthur, and I have decided not to punish you."

"Oh, mother!" I exclaimed, feeling almost ready to cry again, "I had rather you did."

"Why do your father and I ever punish you, my son?"

"To make me remember not to do the same wrong thing any more."

"Yes, dear Arthur. Now do you think you are likely to forget what happened last night?"

"Oh, no; oh, no, mother! I do not think I shall ever behave so badly again. I have asked God not to let me do so."

"Then you see I have no reason for punishing you."

I did not answer, but I fidgeted about by my mother's work-table not satisfied and troubled. She noticed it, and with a look of wistful love in her eyes drew me to her, saying, "Does my boy think I do not love him well enough to forgive him, unless he is first of all punished?" And at this question I gave her a great hug, and ran away glad at heart once more. I did not understand then as I do now, that my mother in her training was looking beyond the present hour, and was giving me a lesson of her own tenderness, that should be a help in making me realize, though only faintly, the free and wonderful love of God that cannot be measured.

In the afternoon I heard that I had hardly left the room when my father entered it. On his return home, he found poor Grant waiting for him. The kind fellow had come up on purpose to beg that I might not be punished, but my mother did not know of this when she forgave me.

Little Tony's funeral took place next day, and both my father and I went to it. It was as late in the evening as possible, that the long, sad walk which the mourners had to take from the shore to the country church might not be made more burdensome still by heat. The church stood on one of the highest points of the ridge, and my father and I rode to it, and joined the procession at the gate. The mourners were few but sincere, and each held in his hand a spray of funeral myrtle, which was dropped into the grave before we turned away.

I had no wish to talk as we slowly walked homewards, and my father also was silent. Only once, as he saw me looking sorrowful, he asked, "You do not forget how long little Tony's body will rest where we have seen it laid to-day, Arthur?"

"No, father; you have told me it is only till the resurrection morning—till our Saviour comes."

"And when he rises again will he be what he was here, weak and suffering?"

"Oh, no; he will have a body that can never feel pain or trouble any more, and he will be always glad."

From that day, the remembrance of this boy-friend of mine, who was so soon taken to heaven, was one of the blessings of my life. I began to try to imitate him, and the thought of his gentleness and patience, and, above all, of the way in which he strove to please our Heavenly Father, was a constant help to me when tempted to anger and rebellion.

Grant kept the toy-boat among his treasures in the cottage, and was, as I have said, my firm friend as long as he lived.

My young readers, if it were to please God to call you soon to Himself, would *you* be ready to go? What do *you* know about heaven? And what sort of example would *you* leave behind you upon earth?

 With 'CHATTERBOX,' Part I., price 3d., for JANUARY, 1869, will be given a beautiful Coloured picture, 'CHERRY RIPE.'



'Poor Betsy was sitting in tears.'

The Volume of the 'PRIZE' for 1868 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'A PUZZLE FOR GRANNY,' will be given with the January Number of the 'Children's Prize' for 1869.

No. I. of a Series of Scripture Pictures, 'SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID,' will be begun in the January Number for 1869.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XI.

NOVEMBER, 1868.

One Penny.



The Duckling.



THE DUCKLING.

NO doubt you have often heard of a drowned chicken; but it is also easy to drown a duckling. I have known a lovely brood of so-called *tame wild* ducks lost in that way. They had, duckling-like, soon found their way into a tub, filled with water and sunk in the ground; but unfortunately it was not so easy to hop up out of the tub as to slip down into it. The water had been allowed to get below the rim, and the six inches of space were too much to overcome. The henwife found the poor old duck sitting woe-begone by the side of the tub, and all the ducklings drowned from cold and fatigue. I shall never forget the misery of two Sheldrakes at the Zoological Gardens, because one of their brood could not get up the stones at the water's edge. The keeper soon helped them. Ducklings should never be left where they cannot easily recover their footing on shore. Of all young things they are among the most engaging.

YOUTHFUL MISSIONARY ADVOCATE.

A TRUE STORY.



A RICH lady was one day overtaken by a shower of rain, so, sending her servant for a carriage, she took shelter in the cottage of a poor man. Having to wait a long time, she amused herself with looking at the contents of the little room in which she was seated, and, among other things, her eye fell upon a large money-box. Being of a kind disposition, she said to a little pale boy, who was sitting by the fire,

'Bring me your money-box, my lad, and I will give you something.' The boy's face was flushed as he rose and took the box to the lady, and he was still more pleased when he saw her about to put in a bright new half-crown; but he suddenly looked up into her face and said, 'Do you know, ma'am, that this is a missionary box?'

'A missionary box!' exclaimed the lady; 'take it back, then, I do not wish to give money to missions; and, if I make you a present of this half-crown, you must promise me that you will not put a penny of it into that box.'

'I cannot promise that, ma'am,' said he, firmly; 'father and mother and I always put part of all the money we get into the missionary box; and after all it is little enough.'

'And how came this thought into your heads?' asked the lady, 'for I am sure you never heard anything about missionaries in the village.'

'No, ma'am, we never did; but I bought a book one day of a pedlar, and it was full of such wonderful stories about the doings of the heathen in far-off countries, that I did not believe they could be true. However, when father read it, he said it was true enough; for he had been a soldier, and had travelled in those very places. So then I asked if I could do something to help them, and mother said we might have a box, and put in all the pence we could spare, the same as they used to do at the Sunday-school to which she went once; so father made this box, and we agreed that we should all put in a part of what we earned.'

'And what will you do with the money when the box is full?' asked the lady.

'I don't know, ma'am,' answered the boy with a puzzled look, 'but we could get another box, and fill that.'

The lady smiled, and said, 'Can you really think it a duty to deny yourselves for such a purpose?'

The boy looked surprised, but answered, 'After all that God has done for us, ma'am, don't you think that we ought to try to do something for Him?'

Just then the lady's carriage came to

the door, but before leaving she put the half-crown into the missionary-box, saying in a laughing manner, 'I hope it may do good.'

Many weeks passed away, and one bright, sunshiny day, the lady again entered the cottage where she had once taken shelter, but this time she was the bearer of good news. Since her last visit, she had been reading some missionary books, and God had led her to see the importance of missions, and inclined her heart to help them; so she had spoken to the clergyman, and to some other people in the village, and the result was, that they were going to have missionary meetings and a missionary society among themselves. From that time the lady not only became a zealous supporter of missions, but she began to take pleasure in all kinds of good works. Thus did God bless the example set by this poor but pious family, and thus will He assuredly bless all those who weary not in well-doing, for the promise is sure, 'That in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not.' — *Youth's Magazine.*



WORK AND REST.

I AM so sorry,' said Annie Grey, and she sighed as she folded up her work one Saturday evening.

'Why are you so sorry, my dear?' her mother asked.

'Because, mother,' said Annie, 'because I am so fond of my pretty worsted

work, and now I must put it away till Monday.'

'Then,' said Mrs. Grey, 'I think you are very ungrateful.'

'Ungrateful!' exclaimed Annie in surprise; 'how can it be ungrateful to like my work, and be sorry to leave it?'

'We will ask that poor weary-looking child who is creeping down the street, and she will tell you.'

'Oh, mother! how can she tell me?'

Without answering her daughter, Mrs.

Grey tapped at the window as the little girl was passing. The child looked up, and then glanced round to see for whom the summons could be, not believing it could be meant for herself, and perhaps she might not have understood even Mrs. Grey's nod and beckoning finger, but Annie, eager to learn what her mother could mean, had run to the door, and called to the child, who turned at the call, and was quickly brought into the house.

Mary Clay looked half frightened and quite puzzled as Annie led her to Mrs. Grey, exclaiming, 'Now, mother, ask her what you said.'

'My dear Annie,' said Mrs. Grey, 'you frighten the poor child; don't be alarmed, my dear,' she added, turning with a kind smile to the little girl, 'I only wished to ask you what your work is, and whether you were not glad of the rest of to-morrow.'

'Oh, yes, indeed I am,' said the child, answering the latter part of the question first, 'I am very, very glad, for I am very tired.'

'So I see,' said Mrs. Grey, and Annie brought a chair, and bade the little girl sit down.

'Now tell me,' continued Mrs. Grey, 'what is your work?'

'To turn a wheel for a loom, ma'am.'

'Do you turn it all the week, and as late as this?'

'Oh, yes, ma'am, and later, only this is Saturday night;' and as if the name had reminded her of a neglected duty, she got up from the chair, saying, 'I ought to be at home now helping mother.'

'Helping!' exclaimed Annie, 'and you so tired?'

'Oh, yes,' said Mary, with a smile, 'mother will give me a bit of something to eat, and then it will be such a change; it will rest me to help mother and go out with her, and take my own money to buy our Sunday's dinner and things for next week.'

'Your own money,' said Annie; 'what money have you?'

The child opened her hand, and showed with some pride and pleasure half-a-

crown, which she said she earned every week by turning the big wheel.

'Does not your father bring home money to buy you food?' asked Annie, hastily.

'I have no father, miss,' said Mary, sorrowfully.

'*Le pauvre enfant!*' said Mrs. Grey, turning to Annie.

'Please, ma'am,' said Mary, 'do not speak French.'

'Why not, my child?' asked Mrs. Grey in surprise; 'and did you know that I spoke French?'

'I thought you spoke it, because you did not wish me to know what you said, and I can speak French!'

'You can speak French!' said Mrs. Grey, still more surprised; 'how did you learn it?'

'My mother speaks it, and she taught me, as she said it might be useful to me some time as it had been to her, and it could do me no harm, if I did not boast about it,' added Mary, colouring, 'and I only spoke now'—she hesitated.

'Because,' said Mrs. Grey, 'you were an honest little girl, and did not wish to hear what we might say; but how came your mother to know French?'

'Mother was lady's maid in a family that lived in France three years, and so she learnt to speak as others did.'

'What was your mother's name, then?' asked Mrs. Grey, with a newly awakened interest.

'Ann Page,' replied the child; 'but please, ma'am, may I go now?'

'You shall go directly, my dear,' said Mrs. Grey; 'but first tell me where you live, and ask your mother if she will bring you to-morrow to see a lady whom she may remember as Maria Butler.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Mary, with a look of great delight; 'are you indeed Miss Maria Butler? how pleased mother will be to see you, she often tells me about you.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Grey, 'tell her I shall be very pleased to see her. And now, I suppose, I ought to let you go; but I must not let you have wasted your time;' and she added a shilling to the half-crown.

When Mary had left the room, Annie

turned to her mother, exclaiming, 'Oh, mother, you forgot to ask Mary to tell me how I was ungrateful.'

'I think not, my dear,' replied Mrs. Grey, 'if you consider a little, you will find out that she did tell you.'

'How, I can't think!'

'Did she not tell you, how hard her work was all the week, how glad she was of the rest of the Sunday? Now, your work is so pleasant, you regret to leave it off on Saturday night; ought you not to be thankful for six pleasant days instead of six toilsome ones?'

'Yes, mother dear,' said Annie, thoughtfully; 'yet,' added she, looking up brightly, 'I am glad I did sigh to-night, or you might never have heard of your old servant.'

'True,' said Mrs. Grey, with a smile; 'but how little you thought of doing good when you gave that sigh. And ought not this,' she continued in a graver tone, 'to remind us that there is One over all, Who can make our most heedless actions work out His purpose, without in the least interfering with our free will?'

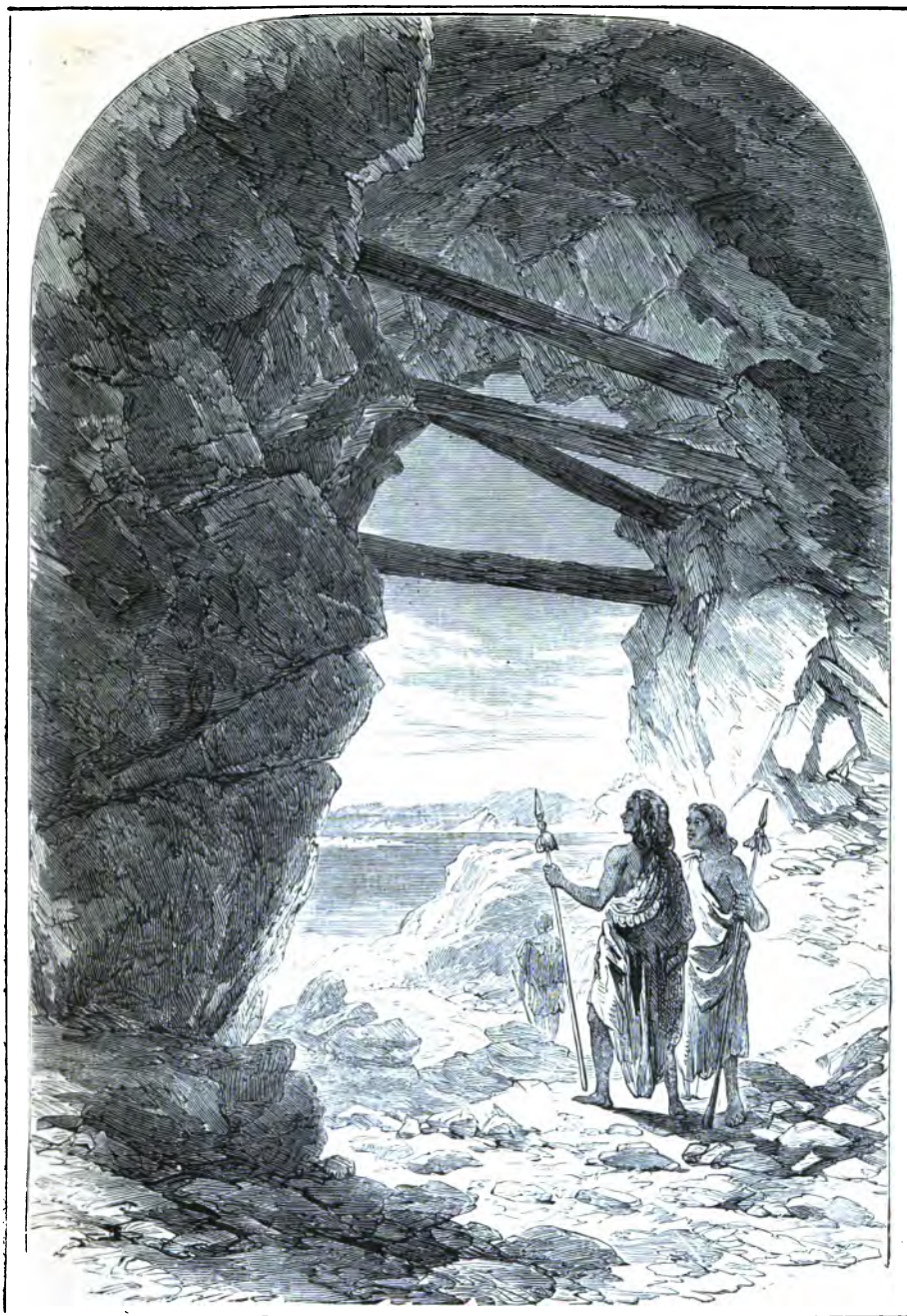
VIEW FROM A CAVE IN NEW ZEALAND.



HE picture gives us a view seen from the mouth of a cave on the south-western coast of New Zealand. With one exception only, the scene looks much like many we have seen on our own coast: there is the sloping beach with its pebbles, the rocks, and the sea. The sun is shining on all.

It looks hot without, but cool within the cave.

The exception is the figures that stand looking out as we might do, upon the prospect. They are New Zealanders. See what dark skins they have, and how curiously they are dressed. A single garment, called a *mat*, is thrown around the body, fastened upon the right shoulder, leaving the left one bare and the arms free. The spears are made of wood, with



View from a Cave in New Zealand.

points of fish-bone, and ornamented with tufts of kiwi's feathers.

The New Zealanders have been for many years in close contact with English residents, and many of their old native ways have changed—among others the mode of dress. They will not wear stockings and shoes, but have no objection to other apparel. They are very awkward, however, when they first put it on. A gentleman once gave a lad some clothing, but without telling him the use of each article. He appeared next day with the jacket hind part before, and the trousers tied about his neck, while his legs were thrust through the shirt-sleeves! A woman is often seen with all her clothing on at once—sometimes three gowns, one over another.

A year or two ago there was an unfortunate war between the natives and the English about some land. While this lasted, the natives put off all their English habits and returned to the wild and savage customs of their forefathers. They had good sense enough, however, to retain their English guns, with which they did great damage. It is calculated that a fourth part of the males are fighting men.

At present the New Zealanders are much reduced in numbers and are still growing fewer. Unless they are protected by our laws, there will be hardly any of them left in fifty years time.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

HERODIAS, THE WICKED MOTHER.

St. Matt. xiv. ; St. Mark vi.



THREE governors, bearing the name of Herod, ruled in Judea or neighbouring countries, under the Roman emperors. They were all cruel men, and were all fierce persecutors of Christ and His people. You may remember them by the different deeds of blood which they did.

Herod the Great, as he is commonly called, put the children of Bethlehem to death, in hope of killing the new-born Jesus ; his

son, Herod Antipas, beheaded John Baptist ; and his grandson, Herod Agrippa, put St. Peter in prison, and *killed James the brother of John with the sword.*

Herodias, whose story we have now to tell, was grand-daughter of Herod the Great, niece of Herod Antipas, and sister of Herod Agrippa ; and she was like them in cruelty and hardness of heart.

Herodias was the wife of Philip, and lived at Rome, and they had a daughter, as Josephus tells us, named Salome.

Herod Antipas went to see his brother Philip at Rome, and there he promised Herodias that if she would come and be his queen he would put away his own wife.

Herodias accepted the base and wicked offer, and she left her husband Philip, taking their daughter with her, and she lived for the rest of her life as the wife of Herod Antipas.

This shameless deed caused much loathing and anger in the land of Israel ; but there was only one man who dared to denounce it openly : only John Baptist dared boldly to reprove Herod for marrying Herodias, and said to him, *It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.*

For this plain-speaking Herodias had a quarrel against John, and would have killed him, but she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man ; and so he would not allow him to be killed, though he shut him up in a fortress among the gloomy mountains that surround the Dead Sea. It is said that Herod still treated him with respect, and allowed his disciples to visit him in his prison. But this did not satisfy the cruel spirit of Herodias, and she watched for some plan of causing his death.

She had not long to wait. *On his birthday Herod made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief men of Galilee ; and, after the feast, Salome, the daughter of Herodias, came in and danced before them, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him ; and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt and I will give it thee.*

Perhaps Salome looked surprised at so great an offer, and could not believe that Herod meant what he said. The king,

seeing this, confirmed his words by an oath, and *swore unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.*

The damsel, being at a loss what to answer, *went forth, and saith unto her mother, What shall I ask?*

Herodias, like a tigress ready to spring upon her prey, at once told her to ask *the head of John the Baptist.*

We are not told what the young girl felt when she heard this savage, blood-thirsty counsel. We may hope that she was shocked and grieved; and some learned men have thought that they trace this feeling in the Greek word which stands for the English ones '*being before instructed*' by her mother, for they think the Greek word means being *urged* or *pressed* by her mother.

We may suppose that the young girl was agitated and excited by the words of her mother, who would tell her that they were both in danger of being driven from Herod's palace if he listened to the warnings of John Baptist. At the same time we may hope that a tender maiden would shrink from turning the king's offer to such a bloody and guilty purpose, instead of asking some jewel or costly robe; and perhaps it was in the struggle of such conflicting feelings that *she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by-and-bye, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.*

On hearing this horrid and cruel demand *the king was exceeding sorry; nevertheless, for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her petition.* He gave two reasons for yielding to a murder which he both grieved and feared to commit. He was afraid of breaking his oath, whereas he ought to have known that no oath could bind a man to commit a crime, seeing that the laws of God are to be obeyed before all other promises; and he was afraid that his guests would think ill of him if he did not keep his word to the letter, not knowing that what men call 'honour' can never be an excuse for doing what is disgraceful in the sight of God, and that he should have risked the scorn and displeasure of all his officers and

nobles rather than shed a single drop of innocent blood.

But Herod was not brave enough thus to do right, and he *sent an executioner to behead John in the prison; and the man went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother.*

Thus did this hardened and wicked mother soil the soul of her young daughter with the stain of the cruel death of a good and holy man. The Bible does not tell us much of the after-fate of these three persons who were thus joined in the guilt of murder. It appears that Herod's conscience did not let him forget his share in the deed of blood; for the Scriptures tell us that when Herod heard of Jesus and His wondrous works, he said, *It is John whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.*

Other ancient histories tell us that Herod was soon after at war with Aretas, king of Arabia, whose daughter had been his wife, and whom he drove away when he married Herodias. Herod's army was cut to pieces, and he had to flee for his life. This led to the loss of his power in Galilee, and ended in his banishment by the Roman Emperor, first to Gaul, and then, it is said, to Spain, where he and Herodias ended their days in shame and wretchedness.

Salome, the unhappy daughter of this wicked mother, also came to a sad end. It is recorded that, many years after, when she was crossing a frozen sheet of water, the ice broke under her, opened so as to admit her body up to the neck, and then closed again and cut off her head.

It has been said by a wise writer that 'the mother's heart is the child's school-room;' and, if so, how thankful should those be who have good mothers, when they see the sin and sorrow into which this wicked mother led her daughter!

And if any are so unhappy as to have mothers who tempt them to go into scenes of wicked riot, like the feast of Herod, or wish to lead them into evil ways, may God give them grace to be firm and strong in doing what is right, while at the same time they are loving and dutiful even to unkind and wicked mothers.



'The damsel gave it to her mother'



'The Prince rose and followed him.'

THE PRECIOUS GIFT.

(Continued from p. 155.)

SO the prince knew that he had not yet found the precious gift, and without

waiting to see the diamond he started again on his travels to another country, more puzzled than ever as to what it was, and where he should find it. At last he thought that he might as well ask if any one could

help him ; so whenever he saw a person whom he thought likely to know, he told them what he wished. But nobody could give him the right answer. Some laughed at him, and said it was all nonsense, that there was no such thing to be found. Some told him it was money and riches, but he knew better. Some were sure that it must be learning, and that seemed more likely. So he went to visit all the wisest men of each country he passed through ; but he found they all disagreed among themselves, and seemed more anxious to prove each other wrong than to do good with their learning. Besides, they did not understand him when he spoke to them about the gift ; they only looked at him through their spectacles, and shook their heads : he thought, that if knowledge had been the thing he was seeking, at least they would have known about it. In time he grew quite despairing and unhappy, and thought he would go back to his father and tell him he could not find the precious gift.

Now it happened that the prince lost his way, and went wandering farther and farther from the broad highway, till at last he came to a narrow little lane that led him down and down till it ended in a deep valley. All round it the mountains rose up high into the clouds ; there were no trees, nor grass, nor flowers in the valley ; the ground was quite bare, but it was covered all over with the footprints of many travellers ; and the prince saw that, though the earth was hard and strong, every step had made a mark in it which he could not rub out. He stood for some time looking at the footprints, noticing how they crossed and re-crossed each other in every direction. How, sometimes, the marks were faint and indistinct, as if the travellers had passed lightly over the ground ; and sometimes pressed deep into the earth, as if every step had been taken with weary pain and trouble. He saw, too, that the prints were of all shapes and sizes, and wondered how such little feet as those which had left their mark in some places could ever have come over the long, dreary road that led to this rough valley. And while he looked and wondered, he saw something else that had

been invisible to him before. By the side of every track, just where the footsteps were most deeply imprinted, there lay something, and it was always something broken. After a while he saw that the whole valley was covered with these broken things. Some of them were only trifles ! Near the track of a woman's footstep lay a child's little shoe, worn out and full of holes ; but the footsteps were so uneven and so dented into the ground that it seemed as if the traveller had fallen down in utter despair. In another place there was nothing but a torn letter, yet the footsteps of a girl had almost ended where it lay. A little farther on there was a bag of money ; near it a broken wreath of laurel, with the leaves all faded ; a child's toy and a heap of sweetmeats lay near two paths made by tiny feet. Gay dresses, bright swords, richly-bound books, precious stones, wedding-rings even, were strewn upon the ground. Whatever set of footsteps the prince followed with his eyes, he found that close beside it lay something broken, or faded, or torn.

He stood still tracing out the different lines of steps, and trying to understand what they meant, and who were the people that had made them ; but the broken things puzzled him—such little worthless trifles lay beside some of the footsteps. He noticed one where a man's strong tread had come straight down the narrow road, and had never once swerved to the right or left, as so many others did, but had kept the middle of the path even where it was roughest : "No wonder," thought the prince, "for his steps are large and firm ; he would not mind the rough places." But about half way across the valley the firm steps ceased, and afterwards only a weak uncertain track showed where the traveller had gone on his desolate way. The prince looked about to see what might have caused the change ; but he saw nothing except two broken violets lying on the ground, so dead and withered that they looked like the dust on which they lay.

It would take a very long while to tell you what curious sights the prince saw in that valley as he wandered about. Per-

haps any one else would have thought it a dull, empty place, and tried to get out of it as quickly as possible. But then the prince saw more than any one else would have done, and so it is not surprising that he stayed there the whole day, and never thought of getting out till it was nearly dark. Then he found he had quite lost his way. The mountains shut him in on every side, and he was too wise a traveller to attempt to climb a strange mountain in the dark. So he made up his mind to stay all night in the valley, though he was very hungry, and wanted some supper more than he had ever done in his life before, as princes do not often have to go without their meals. He looked about for a comfortable place to lie down in, and had just found a corner which he thought might do, when he happened to raise his eyes, and a little way up the mountain he saw a light. That altered the case entirely. If there was a light somebody must have kindled it, and that somebody must have gone up the mountain; so there was no reason why the prince should not do the same: besides, he might find some supper! So off he set, and after looking carefully about he saw a narrow path which soon led him to the entrance of a cave. A bright fire was burning inside, and over it stood a man cooking supper.

Without looking round the man said, "Come in; I have been expecting you this half-hour."

"Expecting me!" exclaimed the prince; "how did you know I was coming?"

"I saw you down in the valley when you were too busy to notice me; but come to supper now, we can talk afterwards."

The prince was very willing to do so, and sat down on one side of the fire while his host sat on the other, and did not speak another word till the meal was ended.

Then the prince said, "Tell me about the valley! How can so many people have come to it along that rough, narrow road, which seems the only entrance? And how do they get out again? Who are they? and why is the ground covered with such strange things?"

And the man smiled as he answered,

"You have known all this since you were a child!"

"But I have never been here before!" exclaimed the prince: "how can I have known it?"

"You have not really come here yet," replied the man, gravely; "you are only a spectator now."

"And shall I come back to the valley again?"

"I hope so: I pray God you may."

"And then?"

"And then your footsteps will leave a path behind them, as you journey on towards the gate you could not see to-day. It is very small and strait; some people never find it, even when they are in the valley."

"And beyond that gate?"

"There lies the precious gift."

The prince was too much astonished and delighted to speak for a few minutes; but then he told how he had been seeking the precious gift up and down the world for three whole years, and no one had ever been able to tell him where to look for it, or what it was.

"Shall I find it now?" he exclaimed, eagerly.

"I cannot tell."

"But you know what it is! Perhaps you have it!" he continued.

And the face opposite to him lighted up as with the shining of a great light; but it was not the light of the sun, or the moon, or any light the prince had ever seen before. It was so solemn and glorious that he felt afraid to speak, and covered his face with his hands; and though no reply came to his question, he felt that he was answered. Presently the man said, "Come with me."

So the prince rose and followed him through a long, narrow passage. It was quite dark, and he would certainly have stumbled over the stones lying in the way if his guide had not carried a lantern, which shed a steady light along the path, and showed him where he could place his feet with safety. After a time, they reached a narrow door and stopped.

"Whither are you taking me?" asked the prince in a low voice.

"To find what you seek," was the reply.
 "And shall I see it?"
 "No, I cannot show it to you; but I
 will show you those who have it."

So saying, he raised a sort of veil which
 covered a window, and bade the prince
 look.

(Concluded in our next.)



A PRAIRIE ON FIRE.

THE summer of 1868 will be long remembered for its great heat and the scarcity of rain. Some farmers could get no water for their cattle and sheep, some poor people could get no water for themselves, and others lost much property by fire. These misfortunes were from want of rain and dew, for had there been rain, the ponds would have been filled for the cattle to drink, and the grass would not have dried up so as to catch fire from the least spark. It is a rare thing in England to see the ground on fire, but in this year commons, hills, and even mountains were seen on fire.

In America there are vast open plains called prairies, which are much larger than any of our English commons or moors. They stretch away from the spectator like the ocean—there is nothing to see for hundreds of miles but prairie and sky.

A prairie on fire is a common thing. A party of travellers after a day's journey made a halt at night. They put up their little tent, and light a fire to cook their food. But while they are enjoying the rest after their long fatigue, perhaps a gust of wind blows a spark or a small piece of burning wood into the long grass. Instantly a flame leaps up, the wind spreads it, and in a short time there is a great extent of land on fire.

The picture shows how fearful a thing it is to be on a prairie when it is in flames. Buffaloes, wild dogs, and snakes, all flee before the devouring element, and take refuge in the same spot as man, too careful of their own safety to hurt each other now. The party before us are praying to God, for none but He can quell the fire, or command the wind to turn the flames in a different direction.



THE PEACOCK.

THIS gorgeous bird, though now common in Europe, is of Eastern origin. Large flocks are found on the banks of the

great river, the Ganges, which the poor Hindoos worship as if it were a God.

As early as the time of King Solomon,

this bird was used to ornament the parks of kings and nobles. Thus we find that the ships of Tarshish brought 'apes and peacocks' (1 Kings, x. 22.) as presents to that great king once in three years.

They were considered a great dainty by the Romans; pies being made of their brains and tongues. The peacock was formerly considered as a royal dish in England; but its flesh is not equal to that of the turkey.

The brilliant colours of the peacock are not seen till about the third year after its birth. They are found sometimes, though not often, altogether white. After shedding his feathers, which he does in each year, the peacock hides himself until they grow again. He then comes from his hiding-place and struts about. No bird has so beautiful a tail as the peacock, and he seems proud of it.

Its voice is not like its feathers, but is a loud harsh croak, that few persons like.

The pea-hen is of a brownish hue. It is smaller in size, and its train, which is smaller, has not that brilliant hue—almost like burnished metal—of the male bird.



KEEP IN YOUR OWN STATION.

HE father was out, and the mother was dining alone; so in case she should feel lonely, two or three little people escaped from the nursery, and, slipping quietly into the dining-room, posted themselves round the table, as near as possible to their mother's chair, so as to be within easy distance of choice little morsels which she raised on her fork to one after the other of the eager mouths around her.

Presently a tiny black insect hurried over the table-cloth as fast as his little legs could carry him, and the children's quick eyes of course spied him out in a moment.

'Oh, mother, look here! look at this funny little creature, see what a hurry he's

in! Where has he come from do you think?' they cried.

You see it was winter time, so that the sudden appearance of this gentleman on the dinner-table surprised the children, as it would not have done, had there been flowers in the room, or salad and fresh fruit on the table.

'I think I can tell you,' said the mother; 'he has come in with the celery; but we must stop this, he's running as fast as he can into my bread.'

And she tried to stop him, and make him mount on a celery leaf that he might be carried out of the room; for she disliked to kill a poor little creature who was doing no harm to any one, and was plainly in great terror and distress himself.

As fast as the blanched celery leaf was presented to him, he trotted away over the white plain of the table-cloth. So the lady took up a wine-glass, and turned it over him, and there he ran round and round trying to escape. To prevent this, a salt-cellar was set on the top of the glass, which pressed it close into the table-cloth, and the little insect became a prisoner.

'Look! look, mother! how he races round and round, and how frightened he is,' cried the children.

'I think, children,' said the lady, 'that he must be an ambitious little fellow; he thought himself above his friends in the garden, so he dressed himself in his best, (you see he has got his dress-coat on, and is all in black), and came uninvited to dine with me. When he arrived, he found himself quite out of his element; he did not know how to behave, so instead of taking a chair, he jumped on the table, and now he runs round and round, and does not know what to do, and I dare say he wishes himself safe at home again.'

At this the children all laughed, and their mother said, 'Ah, you may laugh, but I think it is a lesson for you all, to keep in your places with humility, and not try to aspire to the society of your elders and betters.'

The poor little insect's fate was not yet settled when Nina came in to clear the table, and the children cried to her to

look at the little prisoner under the glass.

Nina, of course thinking the creature was out of place, removed the glass, took him up, and dropped him into the fire! The children exclaimed, 'Oh, Nina, you've killed him!' to which she quietly replied, 'Oh, it was but a small thing.'

Then a little voice at the corner of the table said, 'Mother, dear! isn't it a pity he didn't stay in the garden, and try to do his duty in the station in which God had placed him?'

The mother thought so too, but she did not think that the best time for giving her children a serious lesson. Still, it was true, that if the tiny insect had not left his humble place in the world, he would not have met with his hapless fate.

"ABOVE THE BRIGHT BLUE SKY."

THERE'S a Friend for little children
Above the bright blue sky—
A Friend that never changes,
Whose love will never die;
Unlike our friends in this world,
Who change with changing years,
This Friend is always worthy
The precious Name He bears.

There's a Home for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
Where Jesus reigns in glory—
A home of peace and joy:
No home on earth is like it,
Nor can with it compare,
For every one is happy,
Nor can be happier there.

There's a Crown for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
And all who look to Jesus
Shall wear it by-and-bye:
A crown of brightest glory,
Which He shall there bestow
On all who love the Saviour,
And walk with Him below.

There's a Song for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
And a harp of sweetest music
For hymns of victory;
And all above is pleasure,
'Tis found in Christ alone:
Oh, come, dear little children,
That all may be your own.

A TRAP FOR A HUMMING-BIRD.

YOU have heard of rat-traps and mouse-traps; but did you ever hear of a humming-bird-trap? Perhaps you will think it cruel to try to catch such pretty little things; but wait till I tell you how we do it. There is a hanging-basket in our window, and in that we put trumpet-creeper flowers, and Chinese larkspurs, and tiger-lilies every morning. Then we sit down quietly with our sewing or reading near the window, and it is not long before a loud humming attracts our attention. There, our first humming-bird has come. Round he flies to one flower and then another, with his white-edged tail outspread, and his long bill finding its way even into the deep trumpet-flowers. When his little eyes catch sight of us off he darts, but sometimes he comes back to try one flower more.

This is the pleasantest way to catch birds. We have all the pleasure of watching their pretty ways, and it does not hurt them.

Little children! there are generally two ways to do any thing—one a pleasant and kindly way, the other a cross and cruel way. When you wish your little brother or sister to do anything, try with the flowers of kind words and smiles, not with the steel-traps of scolding and striking.

I will tell you a true story about a girl who knew how to make flower-traps for her little brother. She was only six years old, and her brother was three. One day he was a little sick, and his mother wanted him to put on a shawl before he went out of the nursery. This he did not like to do, and he would have cried and given his mother trouble, if Carrie had not thought of a little plan.

'Charlie,' said she, 'don't you want to play school?'

'Yes,' he answered, gladly, for he liked that very much.

'Well,' said Carrie, 'let me put on your shawl, and we will go to school together in the other room.'

So she pinned it warmly round his neck, and led him off as happy as a little boy could be.



Which of you will try to help your mothers as little Carrie did, and so make flower-traps to catch smiles, and thanks from her, as we catch humming-birds?

The Volume of the 'PRIZE' for 1868 will be Ready on the 15th of November.

A beautiful Coloured Engraving, 'A PUZZLE FOR GRANNY,' will be given with the January Number of the 'CHILDREN'S PRIZE 1869.' New Subscribers are requested to order their 'Prize' immediately.

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THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE

No. XII.

DECEMBER, 1868.

[One Penny



Slow and Sure wins the Race.



SLOW AND SURE WINS THE RACE.

HERE are three boys starting for a race. A capital sport for a winter's day—a much better plan for keeping warm than muffing up in great-coats and sitting over the fire. How keen boys are in running a race to get a good start. How they all have to come back because one *will* spring off before the signal is given. But it is not always the boy who gets off most quickly who wins the race. Often the boy who starts quietly and works along with a steady swing outstrips those who spent all their strength and all their 'wind' on an out-burst at the first. 'Slow and sure wins the race,' at least if it is a long one.

And it is so in the race of learning, which is a long one. If you wish to win a prize in this race, do not think that you will do so by working very hard for a little while and then getting careless because you find that you can outstrip your companions when you do work; but, if you wish to succeed, keep steadily at your lessons, with all your mind through all the school-time.

The Christmas holidays will soon be here, and you will enjoy them with double joy if you have been steadily at work till the happy days come, when lessons are put aside for a time and all is mirth and gladness in the land because we celebrate our Saviour's birth. Perhaps you may have the great pleasure of bringing home a real prize from school, but even if you do not do this, you will have made some steady advance in the long race of learning, and you will have the sweet feeling in your heart that you have tried to do your duty—that you not only started well, but have run all the way as well as you could.

THE LITTLE PLANT THAT GREW IN A DEEP VALLEY.

WHO will tell us a tale?

I will. It shall be about a little plant that grew in a deep valley:—

'Now it was a very humble little plant, and always kept in the shade, and never envied the gay plants which dwelt always in the sunshine, though it heard many a passer-by praising their beauty, while it grew unseen in the shade.

'At last there came a little white bud on this darling plant, that soon burst into a lovely flower whose fragrance filled the air; and when the more gaudy though scentless flowers beheld the simple white blossom, they looked down upon it with contempt, and tossed their proud heads in the breeze, and said among themselves,—“that simple white blossom has chosen to dwell in the shade, and there it must remain; for surely no one will observe it, while we who are so much more gay and bright, dwell always in the sunlight.”

'Very soon afterward there came a person into this valley, to look amongst the flowers; and, strange to tell, he passed by all the brightest and most gaudy ones, and passed on till he came to the simple white blossom; and when he beheld it growing so humbly, and yet so sweetly, he took it into his bosom, and carried it away into his own fair garden, and planted it amongst the fairest and most lovely of flowers; and he said unto it, “Because thou wast meek and lowly, I will exalt thee above the lofty and the vain, and thou shalt dwell in my garden for ever and ever;” and he poured upon it the Water of Life, so that it should never fade; and the simple white blossom became equal with the fairest flower of the garden; for they were all alike precious in the sight of him who owned them, and he loved them all with the same *great* love.'

Now, that is the end of my story; but let me tell you that this simple white blossom is like unto a good little child, dwelling, not in the sunshine of *pride* and *self-conceit*, but in the calm shade of *meekness*, in the deep valley of *submission*.

Such a little one will the Lord of Heaven's glorious garden behold and love, and will say of it,—“Suffer it to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

J. E. J.

THE MOTHERS OF THE BIBLE.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS.



Of all the mothers of the Bible the most honoured was Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The Angel Gabriel was sent to her when she dwelt in Nazareth, and he said to her, *'Hail thou that art highly favoured; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.'*

Mary at first was troubled at his saying, and did not understand it, but Gabriel soon told her in what a wonderful way God was going to honour her, saying, *'Thou shalt have a son and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.'*

Mary was to have that honour which Eve herself, and many another mother among God's chosen people, had hoped for, namely, that the Deliverer, who had been promised even in Eden, might be her son.

Thousands of years had passed since that promise was given. Often had the prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah, and now at length an angel declared that a lowly maiden of Nazareth was to be the mother of the long-expected Christ.

But the prophet Micah (v. 2) had named the very place of the Messiah's birth, and it was not Nazareth, but Bethlehem. How was this to come true? Before the holy babe was born, Cæsar Augustus sent out a decree which required all the families in Judea to go each to the city to which they belonged that they might be taxed. And so Joseph, the husband of Mary, had to go to Bethlehem, for he was descended from David, king of Israel, and Bethlehem was the birth-place and home of David.

Many other families of the race of David had also come to Bethlehem at this same time, and so Joseph and Mary found that there was no room for them in the inn, but they got shelter in some place where the cattle were housed, and there the Holy Babe was born, and His mother wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.

But though the birth of Jesus was thus in poverty, His mother had not long to wait for tokens of the favour of Heaven. The glory of the Lord shone round about some shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night, and an angel of the Lord told them the good tidings of great joy, that a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, was born in the city of David. Then a multitude of the heavenly host appeared, praising God, and saying, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.*

When the angels were gone away from them into heaven, these shepherds hastened to Bethlehem, and when they had seen Mary and Joseph and the Babe they made known what was told them by the angel about the child, glorifying and praising God, and all that heard their words wondered at them, but Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

A second token of the favour of heaven was the visit of the wise men from the East, the first Gentiles who owned the child-Christ as Prince and Saviour. At the time when Jesus was born these wise men came to Jerusalem, saying, *Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His Star in the East and are come to worship Him.* When Herod the king heard of the visit of these strangers, he was troubled, fearing some rival to his power; and when he learnt from the priests and scribes that the Holy Book said that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, Herod told the wise men to search diligently for the young child, and to bring back word to him, that he might go and worship him also.

The wise men departed from the king, and, to their joy, the Star which they saw



The Wise Men from the East.



The Flight into Egypt.

in the East went before them till it stood over where the young child was; and when they saw the young child, with Mary His mother, they fell down and worshipped Him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And then, being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

When Herod said that he wished to know where the young child was that he might worship Him, he really meant to kill Him, and when he found that the wise men did not come back to tell him where the child was to be found, he was exceeding wroth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem from two years old and under. He thought that in this way he would make sure of killing the child he feared; but he did not, for God had sent an angel to warn Joseph in a dream, and Joseph took the young child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt, and stayed there till the death of Herod.

When Herod was dead an angel told Joseph to return, and he took the child and His mother and came into the land of Israel, and went and dwelt at Nazareth.

All Jews were commanded to keep the Passover at Jerusalem, and every year Joseph and Mary went up to this feast, and when Jesus was twelve years old they took Him with them. After the feast, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem. Joseph and the mother of the holy child thought that He was with some of their friends who were travelling with them, and they went a day's journey before they missed Him.

Any one who has seen a company of pilgrims in the East can easily understand how this might be. Some are on foot, some on asses or mules, some on horses or camels, and as there is no road, each little group makes their way as they think best to the well or olive-grove where they have agreed to camp for the night; so it is easy to understand how Joseph and Mary might be separated in the bustle of starting, and might each think that the boy was with the other, till they met in

the evening and then missed him and sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance, and when they found Him not they turned back again to Jerusalem seeking Him.

On the third day they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of the learned doctors, both listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard what Jesus said wondered at His understanding and answers.

When Mary saw her son, she said unto Him, 'Son, why hast Thou dealt thus with us, behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.' Jesus answered, 'Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?'

Mary did not understand what Jesus said, but she kept His words in her heart.

When Joseph and Mary called Jesus He left the doctors and went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them. He submitted Himself lowly, reverently, to His earthly parents, and so gave all children an example that they should be obedient and should honour their father and mother.

We are told no more about the life of Jesus at Nazareth, but we may be sure that He was a dutiful and loving son to His mother and Joseph the carpenter. When Jesus began to teach and preach publicly we hear little of His mother. She was present at the marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee; it was the mother of Jesus who said to Him, *They have no wine*, and was rebuked because she ought to have waited, knowing that at the right time He would do what was best.

Not long after this, when He was in a house hemmed in by an eager and excited crowd, His friends wished to get Him away so that He might have rest, and a message was passed from mouth to mouth in the crowd, till those who stood near Jesus spoke it to Him, and said, *Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with Thee. He answered and said, Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? and He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of my Father*

which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother.

There is no mention of the mother of our Lord during the three years of His public ministry; but it is supposed that she followed Him from place to place, and shared the cares of those holy women who ministered unto Him of their substance.

But all too soon, there came a time, when we know that Mary must have felt, how true were those words of Simeon to her—'*A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,*' that time was when standing at the foot of the Cross she saw her beloved Son in the last and terrible agony. In that hour of darkness Jesus tenderly thought of her that bare Him, and when *He saw His mother and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother. Woman, behold thy Son. Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.* And ancient writers say, that she continued to live under St. John's roof, till in extreme old age she passed from earth to that place where her ascended Son reigns in everlasting glory.

The conduct of Jesus to His mother surely teaches, that in youth we should obey our parents, and in manhood should care for and protect them.

THE ROBIN.

HOW I love you, little Robin,
As so blithe you chirp away,
In your little scarlet waistcoat,
And your knickerbockers gay.
For you hop about the garden,
As though you came instead
Of the flowers, that till spring-time
Have forsaken every bed.
And of all the merry birdies
You're the bravest that I know;
You are not afraid to weather
The winter's frost, and snow.
For your little heart is trustful,
And you no doubt depend
On finding among the children
Many a kindly little friend.
So to show you, little Robin,
How sincerely I approve

Of your little chirruped sermons
On Charity and Love,—

If you visit us each morning,
As soon as Sally comes
To bring us up our breakfast,
I'll throw you out some crumbs.
But if you do not see me
When first you come to seek,
Just hop up to the window,
And tap it with your beak.

ALFRED E. FLETCHER.

A JAPANESE BREAKFAST.

RECENT communications with Japan have shown the people of that country to be much more civilised than was supposed. They are much beyond the Chinese in this respect. Our picture represents a party of the upper classes at breakfast. The apartment seems handsome, and the walls are adorned with vases of flowers.

But what are the people eating? Most likely rice. Before each person is a small stool on which are two cups, one contains tea, the other something more solid. It will be seen that the Japanese, like the Chinese, feed themselves with chop-sticks. Four of the party are gentlemen, and a lady sits at what we should call the head of the table, if there were a table there, but neither tables nor chairs are used in the country.

A breakfast party was lately given by a Japanese official to an European visitor. All the ladies of the house were present; they were barefooted, and all dressed very nearly alike in dark robes. A Japanese lady, when in full dress, looks fat and dumpy, from an excess of clothing. All the ladies went down on their knees to the visitor, such being Japanese politeness. The mistress of the house, before the gentleman left, fetched her baby to show it. Its little head had been already shaved, and it was, in truth, dirty and untidy, only it would not have done to have told the parents so. It was taught to bow its head when spoken to, just as it might have done if it had been one of those china images we sometimes see.

There was a party of Japanese nobles last summer in London. Men and women were



Japanese at Breakfast.

dressed alike in rich silks. They were well bred, and passed much of the day in writing journals of their English experiences. In eating they were observed to take their food with the right hand; but, instead of putting it into the mouth at once, it was first passed into the palm of the left hand and then eaten slowly.



'The king put out his hand and blessed him.'

THE PRECIOUS GIFT.

(Continued from page 172.)

HE did so, and seemed to gaze into a vast building like a cathedral. On

every side arches after arches stretched away into the far distance; there seemed no walls, and no roof, at least that he could see, only the endless lines of beautiful arches rising up till they were lost in the

clouds above. And then he saw that this vast building was full of people, and on all their faces there shone the wonderful light. It seemed quite full, as if there could be no room even for one more, and yet as he looked he saw new people coming in perpetually, and there was room for all as they knelt on the marble floor.

"Who are they?" asked the prince.

"You saw their footsteps in the valley," said the guide: "the footsteps they left behind them on their way here. They sought the precious gift, but all of them carried something that they cared for more than the gift itself—something that they loved best in all the world. And while they carried it they could never find the right way. So at last they had to leave it behind them. It was very hard to do so," continued the guide, and the prince could hear his voice tremble, and see that his eyes were full of tears; "so hard, that some of them would rather have died: but there was no other way, and now they have their reward."

Then the prince remembered all the strange things he had seen lying by the footsteps in the valley, and understood how they came there.

After he had looked for a long time the guide dropped the veil, and again went before him with the light. Presently, as they went on, they heard the sound of many voices: at first the sound was very faint, but it gradually became clearer and clearer; sometimes it swelled into a rejoicing song, and sometimes it sank into a low murmur, as of many hearts at prayer. The guide stopped again, this time before an open door. The prince saw that the building was like the other, only much smaller, and not nearly so beautiful. It also was full of people, who knelt upon the floor. But the people were different from those he had seen before; some were looking about them, some were asleep, some even were at play with each other. Only here and there a few knelt with bowed heads, and prayerful faces, and hands clasped in earnest supplication. Then the guide said, "Listen and learn;" and he beckoned the prince to come in-

side the building, and they both knelt down among the people.

One voice was speaking as they entered, and then all the people answered. The prince caught the words, "Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us."

And the single voice went on:—

"O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world."

The guide turned his head and looked at the prince, and the prayer, "*Grant us thy peace*," rolled through the building, and died away into silence. There was more of the service, but the prince did not hear it. He knew at last what was the precious gift, and from whom he must seek it. Over and over again as he knelt, with his face covered with his hands, he repeated the words,—

"O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace."

And when the service was over, as the people knelt down for the last time, the voice again spoke of "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and the prince knew for a truth that without the precious gift of that peace, all the riches, and honour, and glory of the world would be worth nothing, and could never make him a happy man.

They went out through another door. It led into a crowded street, where numbers of people were passing up and down, occupied with their daily business. The prince found that he had spent the whole night in the mountain; for it was morning, and the rays of the rising sun fell upon him as he left the church. When he turned to speak to his guide he was gone. He looked about for him in the crowd, but he was nowhere to be seen; and just then a man came riding very fast up the street. It was a messenger sent post-haste to tell the prince that the king, his father, was very ill, and that he must come home as fast as he could travel, or he might be too late to see him alive.

So the prince mounted the swiftest horse that could be found, and all along the road other swift horses were waiting for him, and he rode day and night without stopping, and reached the palace just in time. A crowd of people were gathered

round the gates to hear news of their beloved king, and when they saw the prince riding up on his tired horse they raised a shout, but stopped directly for fear of disturbing the dying king. But he heard it through all the doors and windows of his beautiful palace, and a smile lighted up his face, for he knew that his son was near. The prince came and knelt by his bedside; but he could not speak, his sobs choked his voice, for he loved his father very dearly; he never knew how dearly till he knelt there by his dying bed.

And then the king put out his hand and laid it on his head, and blessed him; and the blessing was the one he had heard in the church: for the king prayed that "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," might be with his son for evermore.

As he finished the prince raised his head; there were tears on his face, and it was worn with long travel and want of food and sleep, but over all the king could see the first dawning of that glorious light which was becoming so clear to his own failing sight.

"Father, it is the precious gift!" The light on the old king's face shone so brightly as he heard the words, that it seemed changed and glorified.

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," he murmured; and even as he spake the light faded, and there was one more worshipper in the vast temple of heaven.

BABY'S TOILET.

WIDE awake
The baby lies,
We'll take her up before she cries;
The baby lies
So wide awake,
Nurse will now her darling take.
Here's the sponge
And here's the soap.
Baby will not mind, I hope!
Here's the soap
And here's the sponge,—
How my darling likes her plunge!
Here's the towel,
Dry and warm,
Now she's safe in nurse's arm;

Nicely rubbed
And nicely dry,
She doesn't even wish to cry.

Here's the shirt
And here's the vest,
Soon the baby will be drest;
Here's the vest
And here's the shirt,
Nothing will the baby hurt.

Here's the brush
And here's the comb,
Let us put this rough hair down;
Here's the comb
And here's the brush—
Did I pull her? Well, hush! hush!

Here's the sock
And here's the shoe,
Let us hide this great Tom-toe;
Here's the shoe
And here's the sock,
And here is baby's pretty frock.

Now a hug
And now a kiss,
There's a darling little miss;
Now a kiss
And now a hug,
And now a play upon the rug.

Now the milk
And now the bread,
Soon the baby shall be fed;
Here's the bread
And here's the milk.
White as snow, and soft as silk.

Here's the stool
And here's the chair
For my little lady fair;
Here's the chair
And here's the stool:
Soon her breakfast will be cool.

Here's the kit
And here's the cat,
Purring pussy, soft and fat;
Here's the cat
And here's the kit.
Give them both a little bit.

When my dear
Has breakfast done
She can play, and jump, and run;
Breakfast done
The little dear
Shall have her set of dollies here.



All the day
She can play,
Not a care has baby yet;

She can play,
All the day,
Oh, the baby is a pet! J. E. C. F.

No. I. of a Series of Scripture Pictures, 'SCENES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID,' will be begun in the January Number, and will be continued monthly.

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